



ChildServe
5406 Merle Hay Road
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childserve.org

OUR MISSION

We partner with families to help children with special healthcare needs live a *great* life.



If you have an update to your contact information, please contact us at foundation@childserve.org.

MOST INFLUENTIAL NONPROFIT AWARD

Earlier this year, ChildServe was named the #1 Most Influential Nonprofit in the Des Moines Business Record's 2024 Book of Lists for the first time in our organization's history. The award marks the eighth consecutive year ChildServe earned recognition from the Business Record for its influence as a nonprofit in Greater Des Moines. Every day, the children and families we serve influence us to be champions for their hopes, dreams and goals!

"This recognition would not be possible without the tremendous dedication of our team members, board members, generous donors, volunteers and community partners who remain steadfast with us on our journey to bring our mission to life," said Dr. Teri Wahlig, ChildServe CEO. "To know we are making a difference in the lives of Iowa children and families motivates us to continue to do more, do it better and do it together."



SPRING 2024



great LIFE



Cooper and his physical therapist, Dana

ChildServe Launches \$10 Million Campaign

We're Relocating and Expanding our Current Des Moines Center to Help Kids Like Cooper

ChildServe is relocating and expanding the Des Moines center, located on Woodland Avenue, to more than double the square footage of the current facility, increasing the capacity of children served from 60 to 600. ChildServe's Johnston location will remain our organizational headquarters.

"Our ChildServe team members have done an outstanding job making the best use of space at our current Des Moines location over the past 15 years, but we have simply outgrown the facility," said Dr. Teri Wahlig, ChildServe CEO. "Our current waitlists for our signature programs continue to grow, so we know now is the right time to invest in the future for Iowa children and families. We are incredibly excited about this next step in our regional growth strategy to transform even more lives through specialty pediatric healthcare services."

ChildServe's new campaign – Growing Together – will make this exponential growth possible. This relocation and expansion is essential to meet the growing needs of kids like 3-year-old Cooper, who was born with a rare genetic kidney disorder.

"What we thought would be a normal 32-week ultrasound check-up on our healthy baby boy turned into receiving life-altering news that left us spiraling," said Mady, Cooper's

mom. "My husband Andrew and I were informed that Cooper's kidneys were enlarged and referred to the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital."

After learning their son was the one in 20,000 kids diagnosed with Autosomal Recessive Polycystic Kidney Disease, Mady and Andrew prepared as best they could for Cooper's birth.

Before he was even a day old, Cooper had his first surgery to place a catheter and started dialysis. During the next 15 months of his life, Cooper faced more challenges than many of us will ever experience in a lifetime.

"After several attempts to wean him from the ventilator, Cooper received his tracheostomy at 4 months old. Ten months later, he received a kidney transplant which allowed him to finally go home for the first time at 15 months old," said Mady.



Cooper in the hospital

Continued on page 2

Cooper's family hosts a charity classic to spread awareness for children with life-threatening medical conditions.



Cooper and his ChildServe Physical Therapist Dana Bailey working toward goals in therapy



Alongside changing the lives of kids like Cooper through Medical Childcare and therapy services, ChildServe – Des Moines provides an Autism Day Program which, much like Medical Childcare, fills a gap for Iowa children who need specialized services.

The Growing Together campaign will also allow for the addition of a Neurobehavioral Clinic at ChildServe – Des Moines. The clinic will focus on the population of children with special healthcare needs who have a co-occurring behavioral health need, such as anxiety, ADHD, autism, brain injury, developmental delay, obsessive-compulsive disorder and more.

Help ChildServe change the lives of more families by supporting Growing Together: The Des Moines campaign. Give today at www.childserve.org/growing-together/

Like many families whose child has complex medical needs, “going home” brought on new challenges. Cooper’s diagnosis and transplant recovery have led him on a journey of rehabilitation and hard work to reach essential developmental milestones like sitting, crawling, walking, communicating and feeding.

“ChildServe – Des Moines has been a huge blessing for our family during Cooper’s transition home from the hospital. With Cooper’s medical needs, our daycare options were very limited in the area. He needed a place where people feel comfortable suctioning a trach and providing medicine and feedings through a g-tube,” said Mady. “We have home nursing some days, and that’s a blessing too, but we felt it was important for Cooper to socialize with other kids. However, the biggest benefit for us is that Cooper could receive therapy appointments during the day while he is in ChildServe’s Medical Childcare program.”

Cooper started therapy at ChildServe in August 2022, and Mady and Andrew had two big goals: to see him walk and talk. For Cooper, this would require the support of pediatric speech, occupational and physical therapists, and specialized caregivers.

“Since Cooper receives therapy during the day while we’re at work, we can pick him up from ChildServe and enjoy the rest of

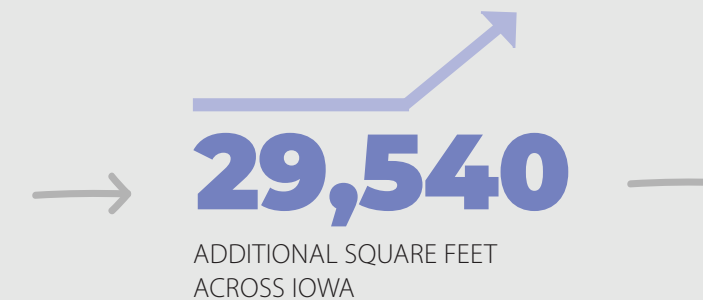
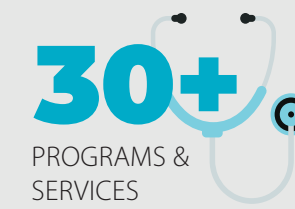
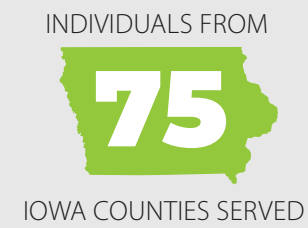
the night at home as a family,” said Mady. “His therapy team does a great job keeping us up-to-date on his progress and sending pictures and videos since we aren’t able to attend the appointments.”

The therapy team at ChildServe created a care plan unique to Cooper’s rare diagnosis. His therapists have been working hard to help him achieve goals and be the adventure-seeking 3-year-old he is.

“Today, Cooper is walking anywhere and everywhere, and at times even running,” said Mady. “His speech therapist has helped him tolerate a Passy Muir Valve (PMV) on his trach, which allows him to verbalize. He has progressed from wearing the PMV just a minute a day, to a few hours a day, and he is now enjoying vocalizing different sounds!”

“The therapists at ChildServe have given Cooper the opportunity to be a toddler. Cooper is just one of thousands of children who have had their lives changed by ChildServe. We’re so proud of Cooper’s resilience — nothing stops him or holds him back! Despite all he’s been through, he is so brave and happy.”

ChildServe’s Growth by the Numbers



*Statewide numbers