



Helen DeVos Children's Hospital School Program

Our May 17, 2017 LEAD Learning Session was led by Sarah Smith, our Helen DeVos Children's Hospital (HDVCH) Child Life Teacher and School Liaison. Sarah bridges the gap between the hospital, school and family to help maintain a somewhat sense of "normalcy" for our pediatric patients and their family.

Sarah's role is two-fold. She is the HDVCH Hospital Teacher and the only School Liaison. As hospital teacher, her main objectives are to offer academic support for school-aged children, provide bedside and group instruction, share educational materials, and normalize the hospital environment. As School Liaison, Sarah works to reduce future educational concerns due to medical illness, collaborates with schools of children with chronic medical conditions, assist in navigating the return to school, and encourage a balance between medical and academic needs.

She also hosts Club TCB, "Taking Care of Business," providing hands-on classroom experience for elementary students, video lessons and educational activities for children in isolation, while promoting normalcy through social and academic routines unique to HDVCH.



Sarah predominantly works with our Pediatric Hematology/Oncology, Bone and Marrow Transplant, Pulmonology, and Nephrology patients who are in the hospital long-term or frequently due to their illness. As our only teacher on staff, Sarah is doing incredible work for hundreds of patients we serve, and her case load is growing!

One of our current funding priorities is to endow Sarah's position, which will ensure that even one hundred years from now, these services will be available to our pediatric patients and their families. Please consider a gift that will make an impact on children for years to come!