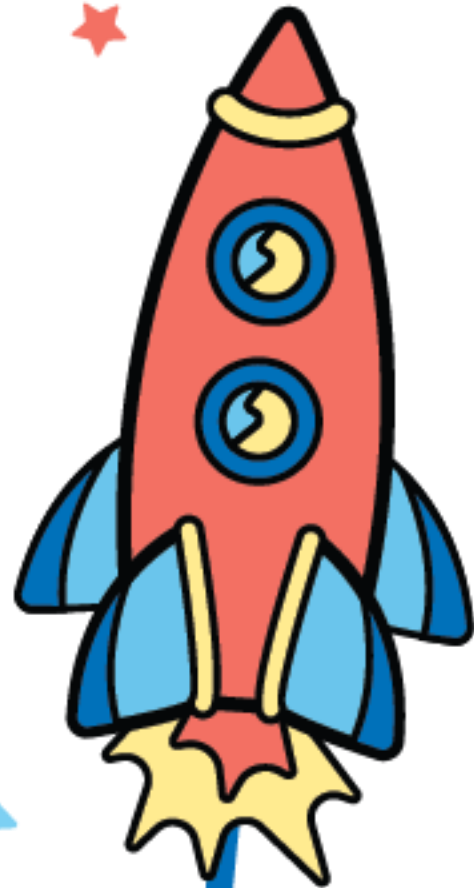


WISH JOURNEY



*Welcome to  
Our Family!*

Make-A-Wish®



Your Wish Journey has just begun, and we are thrilled to invite you into the Make-A-Wish® family. We are excited to grant your child’s wish and look forward to creating a truly transformational experience for your family. Starting today, we begin an important journey together to build everlasting hope, strength, and joy for your child.

To get started, we have enclosed materials that will guide you and your child through the Wish Journey. Your family will also be assigned a wish team that is dedicated to making your child’s wish experience something your whole family will cherish. From all of us at Make-A-Wish, welcome and *let’s do this!*

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## A Letter from Our First Wish Parent

Dear Wish Parent,

*My name is Linda Pauling, and I am a wish mom. When my son, Chris, was diagnosed with leukemia in 1979, I cried and asked myself, why my child?*

*One of the hardest parts by far was addressing Chris' questions about what was happening to him. And with that, came the sadness of knowing everything my 7-year-old son would miss.*

*We decided to make the most of the life he did have, starting with his one true wish – to become a police officer. Chris' favorite show was CHiPs and he dreamed of being a police officer. When a friend said he could help make Chris' wish come true, I was not sure what to expect, but the memory of Chris' wish day will live forever in my mind.*

*Chris received an official uniform from the Arizona Department of Public Safety, including badges and motorcycle wings. My friend and officers from DPS had Chris helping with traffic stops, before they took him on a ride above the city in a helicopter.*

*He was the happiest I've ever seen him. He came alive again, transforming into a child full of hope, joy and wonder.*

*For that day, my son forgot about his physicians, the hospital stays and even his pain. I can't begin to express the happiness I felt in my heart, and, because of this, I continue to remember Chris' wish more than I remember his illness.*

*After Chris' wish came true, the community who came together to make it possible considered how, together, we could give this experience to other children and their families. A group of volunteers and less than \$40 – that is how Make-A-Wish began.*

*I truly believe Make-A-Wish was the reason for Chris' life.*

*I continue to be amazed and inspired with how one little boy's wish to be a police officer now touches the lives of so many people. I still feel Chris' loss daily, but I also feel Chris' wish helps ease the burden on my heart. I will never forget the joy in his eyes during his wish and the days that followed.*

*The caring people at Make-A-Wish want to do something very special for your child and ask for nothing in return. A wish is meant to be an opportunity for your child to experience what brings them the most happiness and to provide hope for your family that will last forever.*

*Whether for days, years or decades after a wish is granted, I have seen the incredible impact through my own eyes – with Chris and the hundreds of thousands of wish kids who have followed him. It is my sincere hope that you and your family will experience that impact for yourselves.*

Best wishes,  
Linda



# Wish Journey Overview

A wish is not a fleeting gift – it’s a carefully planned journey, tailored to your child, and helps them replace fear with confidence, sadness with joy and anxiety with hope.

The next steps of the Wish Journey are:

- Wish Discovery
- Wish Creation
- Wish Granted
- Alumni and Family Engagement





# Wish Discovery



*Your child has the power to discover their wish!*


- **Your wish team** will be made up of Make-A-Wish staff, volunteers, or both. This is the team who will guide your child along their Wish Journey. The wish team will contact you to schedule a time to meet and start talking about your child's wish. We are excited for your child and family to meet the team!
- **The first Wish Discovery visit** is an opportunity for your child and family to make a connection and feel comfortable with your wish team. You may meet virtually or in person. *Your wish team will work with you to determine what is most convenient and safe for your family.*

## Discovering a Wish

During the Wish Discovery meeting, the wish team will work to gather 2-3 different wish ideas from your child. Along with gathering the wishes themselves, your wish team will want to gather information about your child's vision of the wish idea. Each child's wish is unique, so our focus is on learning the true heart of your child; the reasons they choose the wish ideas are just as important as the wishes itself.

It is possible that the wish team may request a second meeting or a chance to speak to your child a few times, to get to know them better. Be patient with your child, and the Journey, and know that we are working together to provide an experience that will be life-changing for your child. Sometimes this takes a little more planning. In addition, if your child is unable to verbalize or communicate their wish ideas, your wish team may request input from you and the people who are involved in your child's care to help get to the heart of your child's wish ideas (i.e. teachers/aides, PCA, nurse, etc.).

It is important that this meeting happens with minimal influence from you or other family members. We understand how tempting it is to insert your thoughts and ideas, but our experience has proven that it is crucial to let your child make their own choices about their wish ideas.



If you'd like to brainstorm ideas with your child before Wish Discovery, here are some ways to help your child get started without influencing their ideas. The wish team will have their own ways to help your child brainstorm during Discovery as well.

1) **Encourage and/or assist your child to think about and write down their ideas.** Ask your child open-ended questions that are appropriate for their age. Instead of asking the big question, "What is your wish?," it's sometimes easier to start with smaller questions like:

- What are your favorite things to do? (by yourself, with your friends, with your family?)
- What is something you'd like to learn more about?
- What motivates you?
- What would be your best day ever?
- If you found (or were given) a bag of money, and were able to spend it any way you wanted, what would you do with it?

If your child is older/more mature, try asking:

- What gives you the strength to keep fighting during your medical journey?
- What will provide you with the hope you need to embrace the future?

2) **Freedom of expression:** each child expresses themselves differently, and we want to meet them where they are. Encourage and/or assist your child to share their wish however it feels most comfortable. Some examples include:

- Drawing a picture
- Telling a story through cartoons or pictures found online and/or in magazines
- Creating a poster to showcase their wish ideas

The first few pages of your child's Wish Journey booklet are design to help your child think about their most heartfelt wish. There are both question and drawing prompts to kickstart your child's brainstorming.

There is no right or wrong way to share a wish idea – and this applies to brainstorming as well as the Wish Discovery itself!



## Preferred Communication Style

To ensure a smooth Wish Discovery experience, we would like to learn more about your child's general communication style and the ways your child would prefer to share their ideas during the meeting. The wish team will adapt to any feedback given, so please do not hesitate to share this information when they call to schedule the Wish Discovery meeting.

### Some Thought Starters

- Does my child open up to strangers quickly, or does it take time?
- What have others done to help my child warm up to them?
- Would it be beneficial for the child to participate in art or play time with the wish team ahead of the brainstorm?

### Communication Note

We know that all children communicate in their own ways, even if they cannot speak or have limited ability to express their thoughts and ideas. If your child is unable to verbalize or communicate wish ideas, please let us know. We will then work with you and other members of your child's care team to complete a communication profile in advance of the Wish Discovery visit. This profile helps your wish team better understand your child's communication style, gives us an understanding of the way they display their emotions, and provides insights into your child's likes and dislikes. We also ask that you let us know if your child utilizes any of the following items for communication:

- **Unaided Communication Systems:** Does your child rely on their body to relay a message? (Examples: gestures, body language, sign language)
- **Aided Communication Systems:** Does your child rely on tools or equipment in addition to their body? (Examples: paper/pencil, communication books/boards, electronic devices)

## Wish Expenses and Details

Make-A-Wish will make the arrangements and cover the direct expenses related to your child's wish. These items will vary by wish type and will be explained to you by your wish team during Wish Creation.

We may also use community resources to help plan and complete your child's wish. Availability of resources often can play a part in our ability to grant a wish, and/or in the timing of a wish; you will be kept in the loop on your child's wish timeline should that apply.



## Wish Limitations

Please understand that, as hard as we try, there are some wish requests that we cannot grant. Although we encourage wish kids to use their imaginations when considering wish ideas, there are policies and standards set forth by Make-A-Wish that must be considered in planning a wish. *All wishes are reviewed by Make-A-Wish staff and, in some cases, by our Board of Directors and/or our Medical Advisory Council before approval is granted.*

**Wishes must be medically appropriate, age appropriate, and directly related to the interests and desires of the wish kid.** There are certain types of wishes that we cannot fulfill. These include, but are not limited to:

- Firearms and Weapons
- Gifts of Money
- Wishes for Medical Treatment
- Large Scale Support (public)
- Multiple Wishes
- Animal Restrictions
  - o Service Animals
  - o Animals illegal to own or that must be sourced outside of the United States
- Real Property
- Swim Spas & In-Ground Pools
- Hawaii wishes for wish children under the age of 5
- Wheelchair Accessible Van Conversions
- Motorized vehicles, including but not limited to:
  - o Cars, vans, trucks, motorcycles and SUV's
  - o Any vehicle designed for living: including but not limited to, house boats, motorhomes, etc. '
  - o 3-wheel ATV's\*, 2 or 4-wheeled off-road or unlicensed vehicles for any child under the age of 16
- Aircraft, including but not limited to:
  - o Planes, powered paragliders, etc.

*\*The prohibition on these types of wishes also extends to the use of such vehicles during wish-related activities or excursions.*





## Your Role in Wish Discovery

Above all, we ask for your partnership throughout the Wish Journey. Prompt and transparent communication with your wish team will be appreciated so we can ensure the best wish experience for your child.

- There may be certain information and items requested from you, as we walk with you through the Wish Journey. What specifically will be requested will be case-by-case depending on your child's unique wish ideas.
- *Signature Note:* Regardless of the wish, Make-A-Wish requires the signatures of all adults participating in a wish and of parents and/or guardians of any minor participant. We ask that you provide us with contact information for all appropriate parties so a Make-A-Wish representative can contact them directly to obtain the necessary signatures.
- If unique family circumstances prevent all parents/guardians from signing documents, a member of your Make-A-Wish team will discuss options that may be available. \*\*
- *Additional paperwork:* Depending on your child's wish, there may be additional paperwork that you are asked to complete after the Wish Discovery visit and before the wish is officially approved. We will let you know if this applies to your child's wish when the time comes.

*\*\*Note: All information you provide to representatives of Make-A-Wish will be kept confidential, and any items collected by your wish team during Wish Discovery will be held securely within Make-A-Wish and only shared when necessary for the completion of the wish.*



# Wish Creation

*Your child's wish has been discovered!*

Once your child's wish is officially approved, your wish team will get to work making the wish come to life.

*Reminder: You may receive calls and/or emails from your wish team throughout the Wish Journey seeking additional information required for planning your child's wish. We appreciate your partnership in responding to these requests promptly!*

## Timing of a Wish

Make-A-Wish will work with your family to schedule the wish. Your wish team may ask you during the Wish Discovery meeting for time periods convenient for your child and your family as well as dates that should be avoided. **Please know that any dates you provide will be noted during the planning process, but we cannot guarantee Make-A-Wish availability during all dates.**

### **Important notes:**

- We work to grant all wishes in a timely manner, unless there are medical or wish-related circumstances which lengthen the time needed to grant the wish or require a child to change his or her wish.
- Your flexibility in scheduling the wish will ensure a smooth planning process. Unless it is medically necessary, we cannot guarantee any specific dates for your child's wish.
- We understand that a wish child's health may change at any time. If your child's medical condition changes, at any point during the wish process, please notify Make-A-Wish immediately. Once a wish is approved and planning begins, wishes can only be canceled, postponed, or rescheduled if medically necessary.

## Determining the Wish Participants

Participants that are sponsored by Make-A-Wish may vary depending on the nature of the wish. Typical participants include:

- Wish Kid
- Two adults of the wish kid's choosing (will include at least one parent and/or legal guardian)
- Child's siblings who are under 18 at the time of referral



## Wish Granted

*It's time to celebrate! Put aside all that you have been through, focus on this moment and make the most of it.*



### Your Child's Wish Details

Your wish team will keep you updated on details about your child's wish as it is created, but most of the specific wish details will be shared with you within a couple weeks of the wish date to ensure that all information is as current as possible. If your child's wish involves travel, we will provide you with an itinerary close to your travel date that outlines all the details of your trip.

*Please share any changes in contact information, such as new phone numbers, emails, or home addresses. We might need to contact you regarding an urgent matter. If we cannot reach you in time, it could delay or affect the quality of the wish.*

During the wish, please refer to any wish plans your wish team has provided and remember to be on time during scheduled parts of your child's wish. This will guarantee your child will enjoy their wish in its entirety.





# Alumni and Family Engagement

*Take some time to reflect on your Wish Journey and your favorite moments of the experience.*

*We hope you have fond memories that will stay with you for a long time to come.*



## Post-Wish Survey

Our goal at Make-A-Wish is to provide you every opportunity to enjoy the entire Wish Journey with your child. After your child's wish is granted, a survey will be sent to your family about your experience. Your participation in this survey helps ensure that we continue to create high-quality wishes and provides us insight into the Wish Journey from your perspective.

## Wish Alumni Community

We're honored to have granted your wish, and your journey doesn't stop here. Our Alumni Manager will formally welcome you to the wish alumni community of more than 300,000 across the U.S.

- Through the wish alumni community, we commit to building upon your Wish Journey by offering enriching ways to stay engaged.
- Part of the power of your Wish Journey is sharing it with others. Invite your family members and community to see the impact of your wish.
- Connect with us on social media. There is a vibrant, supportive community of alumni and supporters waiting to meet you.
- We invite you to "Wish It Forward" and donate to help wishes continue, whether you choose to do so right after your wish or in the future when you're ready. Part of the magic is being a part of making the next wish possible.
  - **Share your story**, whether through photos or speaking. Your story is powerful and inspiring.
  - **Connect your community**. Explore how your school, workplace, faith community, and neighbors can get involved.
  - **Attend events** and interact with diverse opportunities to meet other alumni and have fun while raising critical funds to grant future wishes.
  - **Volunteer**. Our wish granters and volunteers are the heart of the organization.