**BOUNCE CHILDREN’S FOUNDATION**

Bounce Children’s Foundation, a Chicagoland not-for-profit organization, builds community for chronically ill children and their families through a variety of ongoing home and community based programs. Combatting the deep sense of invisibility and extreme isolation these kids and families feel, Bounce builds resilience by bringing members together for fun, friendship, education and encouragement. It creates a support structure to help sick kids, their parents, *and* their siblings, move from simply surviving to truly thriving -- until cures are found. 

Each program unites kids and families, both physically and virtually, to provide distraction, to reduce frustration, to create learning, to enhance coping and to build hope. The five program pillars, designed to work synergistically together, include:

#### *Bounce Bash™:* family adventures designed to include medically fragile children. Kids and families come together in an extended Bounce Family for a much-needed break from their reality of scary doctor visits, painful therapies, and nasty side effects through face-to-face opportunities to be safe, accepted and ‘normal’.

#### *Bounce Net™:* a safe space online for parents/caregivers to form a virtual community of shared support. Bounce introduces and provides access to additional resources. Members can also share resources, compare notes, and bolster one another whenever and wherever.

#### *Bounce Academy™:* educational opportunities for parents/caregivers to enhance their abilities to cope financially, intellectually, emotionally and psychologically—all while their children are supervised close by, safe and entertained so parents don’t have to worry about leaving kids at home.

#### *Bounce It Forward™*: invites individuals and organizations to ‘pay it forward’ by donating tickets to sporting, theatre and other events for use by Bounce kids/families. Providing the unexpected, the program restores spirit and optimism for families experiencing the negative emotional impact of frequent medical intervention.

#### *Bounce Back Kits™:* fun-filled care packages for times of serious medical intervention when families are ‘locked in’ at home, and to recognize important milestones, holidays and birthdays. These spirit-boosting packages include board games, videos, pizza coupons, arts & craft kits and decorations.

~~ *Bounce builds community for chronically ill children, and their families. ~~*

When a child is diagnosed, the entire family is diagnosed, and everyday life is hard for all.

* Sick kids face a myriad of unimaginably stressful setbacks.  Life is a never-ending series of crises and medical interventions.  Treatments are scary and painful.  Hospital visits are frightening and lonely. Normal everyday activities - school, playing with friends, attending social events -   
  are difficult at best.
* Parents are perpetually worried, stressed, and exhausted.   Caregiver burnout is common. Financial burdens are inevitable. Unpredictability is the norm. And the divorce rate is high.
* Siblings feel overlooked and resentful, scared and lonely, guilty and angry.  Often they are pushed into caregiving roles way beyond their years and can also be bullied outside the home.

The entire family is forced to accommodate their child’s illness creating anxiety for all. Tethered to home, they must make major adjustments to schedules and priorities.

And while there is a plethora of support when hospitalized, things change when home.  Kids and families need psycho-social support and ongoing input from experts, as well as inclusion in a community where they can share with, and lift up, others who walk a similar path.

Bounce is unique. It alone provides this much needed support to fill this critical gap in the overall care and health of the 15-18 percent of US kids who battle chronic illness – 4+ in each classroom and some 300,000 across Chicagoland. One hundred percent privately funded, Bounce offers all programs free of charge. And, while there is no income requirement, many members are low income and all face extraordinary out-of-pocket medical costs.

**BOUNCE SUPPORTED DIAGNOSES:**

AIDS, Amputations, Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis, Severe Asthma, Burns, Cancer, Cardiac Disease, Cerebral Palsy, Chron’s & Colitis, Cleft Lip & Cleft Palate, Cystic Fibrosis, Diabetes, Epilepsy, Heart Defects, Kidney & Renal Disease, Organ Transplants, Rare Genetic Disorders, Sickle Cell Anemia, Spina Bifida, Traumatic Brain Injury,

and *countless* *other Chronic Medical Conditions*

*~~ From simply surviving to truly thriving – until cures are found! ~~*