



8 Ways Child Life Services Is Making a Difference at Mission Bay

The new UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital San Francisco was built with care and compassion. The sleek new building features child-friendly patient rooms, common areas designed to foster community and connection and spacious facilities that will help enrich our range of **Child Life Services**. There's a lively teen lounge, a relaxing family room, light-filled classroom spaces and a state-of-the-art digital arts studio. Our goal: to help young patients feel connected and comforted, no matter if their stay is brief or lengthy. Here are some of the highlights:

Dog Days

Pet therapy has been an important part of UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital San Francisco for several years. Our therapy dog visits patients both at their bedsides and throughout the hospital in programming spaces. Last year alone, our therapy dog visited with more than 600 patients. At the new children's hospital, patients can play outdoors with our therapy dog. Several new, accessible terraces and beautiful garden spaces are at our disposal, making fresh air, sunshine and a game of fetch something everyone can look forward to.

All in the Family

To help support parents and siblings as best as possible, we've designated a spacious Family Resources Room where you can relax, connect to Wi-Fi, chat with other families and learn more about your child's condition. There are two telephone rooms for making private calls. The room also has a Resource Library, where parents can check out books. You can make use of a scanner, fax and computer terminals to catch up on any business. Missing vital toiletries? There's a stock of necessities on hand here, as well as a special shower area for families to use.

A Soothing Sensory Space

The new hospital features a multisensory room, designed to help children of varying ages and developmental abilities escape the medical environment in a mindful way. An inviting, soft mat and cozy chair sit under a fiber optic waterfall. Shimmering lights bounce off a disco ball, and brightly colored stars dance around the ceiling. There's a giant column of swirling bubbles and a 15-rung ladder of lights with changing colors. And the rubber flooring is interspersed with brightly colored floor squares that make music or silly sounds when you step on them. Every single toy has been carefully selected for its fun textures, sounds and lights.

"The equipment can provide stimulations and opportunities to explore using different senses — tactile, visual or hearing," says Beatrix Musil, of Child Life Services, who was instrumental in establishing the multisensory room at the new hospital. "This multisensory exploration can help increase communication for children who may not be able to communicate verbally, and it can help build developmental skills," Musil says.

Power of Play

Even the sickest patients have play space: The Blood and Marrow Transplant Unit has a special activity room with a windowed wall and phone receiver, so patients who are restricted due to infection risk can talk to their siblings. And near the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, a small playroom for siblings and parents of critical patients features muted light, fiber optic starbursts in the ceiling that look like stars, and low-slung alcoves where families can talk in a protected space.



Patients at the new hospital will be able to take a pet therapy dog, outdoors for a game of fetch.



You'll find art throughout the hospital, including pieces created in collaboration with the Exploratorium.



In waiting rooms and on walls, small touches invite kids to engage, helping them feel welcome.

Healing Power of Art

Patients at Mission Bay don't just look at all the art. They're an integral part of the creative process, making their own art as a way to cope with illness and help the healing process. Mission Bay patients have a designated art studio space where they work with our experts and in support groups to create their own art and music.

The art studio's walls and ceilings will be decorated with dynamic works of art created by patients; musical instruments are displayed in nooks on the walls. This light-filled space features a wall that is almost entirely windows, allowing young artists to use nature and the sky as inspiration. The new studio has ample space for patients who have IVs, are in wheelchairs or who simply want a bit of privacy while they create. The studio is also located directly next to a kitchen space, so therapists can bake clay creations in an oven.

More Ways to Make Music

A large music studio features a wide range of musical instruments and harnesses the latest in technology to help children make beautiful music during challenging days. Kids can record songs or a video in the new recording studio, which will have a powerful desktop Mac, software apps for recording, a beat-making app and a pro digital mixing board, which can be used for live shows or for recording. They can slip on studio-quality headphones and explore different sound effects boards and croon into sleek microphone stands. We will also be able to take the mobile recording set-up to patient rooms — bringing the studio experience to them.

A Dynamic School Space

The new schoolroom at Mission Bay is a light-filled space that has been thoughtfully laid out, offering a reading nook, private office spaces, study carrels for students who need a bit of privacy and quiet and ample computer work stations. An expanded digital library of books and DVDs are available for patients to check out. San Francisco's fabulous science and art museum, the Exploratorium, has created tabletop exhibits to use in lesson plans that mirror the hospital's larger art installations.

Thanks to Oneview digital screens in hospital rooms, patients who can't make it to the schoolroom can keep up with their studies. They can access streaming classes and participate with the touch of a button.

Teen Time

A new dedicated teen lounge welcomes teenagers to participate in activities and interact with other children their age. Clusters of multimedia screens allow kids to play video games or watch their favorite shows. There is a foosball and air hockey table, teen-appropriate art and craft supplies and a kitchen for cooking nights. With cozy couches, dimmer lighting, overstuffed beanbag chairs and interactive technology like iPads available for loan, teens will finally have a space to unwind and connect. The lounge is available to both patients and their siblings.



In the Teen Lounge, older patients can hang out, play video games or even whip up meals.



Serving kids K-12, the Marie Wattis School is staffed by fully credentialed teachers.