



Photo © Joel Wiegand

Henry, Age 6  
2020 Photography Exhibition  
Learn more at [eastersealsdfvr.org/photo](http://eastersealsdfvr.org/photo)

## Essential Support & Immense Gratitude



# THANK YOU!

Our gratitude runs deep.

Whether you participated in a virtual event, responded to our recovery campaign or offered words of encouragement, you've helped us keep our footing and we are truly grateful.

Thank you for your investment in our mission. Together, we continue to help children with developmental delays and disabilities reach new goals and meet milestones.

### Offering individualized services for families, including in-person & tele-therapies

Call 630.282.2022 for evaluations or to schedule an appointment.

### Donate

Call 630.261.6240 or visit [eastersealsdfvr.org/donate](http://eastersealsdfvr.org/donate)

### Remote Volunteering

Call 630.282.2030 for individual, corporate and group opportunities

### Villa Park | Naperville | Elgin

630.620.4433 | 630.357.9699 | 847.742.3264

[eastersealsdfvr.org](http://eastersealsdfvr.org)

[info@eastersealsdfvr.org](mailto:info@eastersealsdfvr.org)



@eastersealsdfvr

easterseals DuPage & Fox Valley PRESENTS THE CHILDREN'S SHOWCASE

[eastersealsdfvr.org/showcase](http://eastersealsdfvr.org/showcase)

## Guiding Families Through a Pandemic

### Providing Answers & Support

Easterseals DuPage & Fox Valley has provided tele-therapy for more than 10 years. Within two days of the statewide shelter-in-place order, all 87 therapists and our social services team completed an extensive tele-therapy training led by Director of Speech-Language, Feeding, & Assistive Technology, Valerie Heneghan. This training ensured that our team was well prepared to continue helping families from home.

At the time of the shutdown, five-year-old John was preparing for his start to kindergarten with the help of therapies at Easterseals. Change is challenging for John, who has autism, and being home without his usual activities was hard for his family. When his services shifted to tele-therapy, John's parents were glad that Valerie was there to help with the transition.

John's therapy services grew to include occupational therapy as well. He developed the same strong connection with his new therapist, Meg, even though they have only met through the screen. She worked to truly understand his interests and body language, and individualizes each session to meet John's needs, interests and therapy goals. He logs on each week ready to learn and play!

His speech-language therapy sessions are full of online resources and games that keep him engaged and interested in learning. It can take longer for John to process requests, especially if he is being asked to respond to multiple questions and instructions at once. Valerie has taught John's family key strategies that have helped them communicate more effectively. His family also gained an understanding of how John's sensory needs impact his communication skills. John's Occupational Therapist, Meg, has identified many ways to provide the sensory input John's body needs so he can focus and enhance his ability to communicate and learn.

His mom, Katherine, shares: *"We have found that the therapists at Easterseals stand apart as they are specialized to work with children with different needs. When our son is doing his tele-therapy sessions, the attention is solely on our son and learning about how he operates as an individual. The therapists at Easterseals have taught us so much about autism and how to best accommodate and interact with our son to enrich all of our lives. We are so grateful to have them guide our family through the beginning stages of our autism journey."*

While the start to kindergarten looks different than John's family imagined, they are grateful that Easterseals has provided the tools and skills to help him grow and learn.

MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
All 3 centers close to protect our clients, families and staff	Reopen to limited in-person therapies	84% of families report that their child is making progress in tele-therapy	Tele-therapy, in-person and hybrid therapy services continue	3,465 therapy sessions provided in October			





**Thank you to:**

**DuPage Foundation**

**DuPage County  
Community Services**

**Elgin Covid  
Response Fund**

**Grand Victoria Foundation**

**WorkNet DuPage**

**Oliver Hoffman Foundation**

**for providing Covid-19  
Relief Funding & Supplies**



Abby shares her fun surprise package from her Exelon buddy.

## Community Response to COVID-19

The community response to the pandemic has made it possible for us to re-imagine our service model, reposition our operations and address some of our most critical needs. Before Illinois instated its stay-at-home order, our clinical team quickly expanded our tele-therapy program which allowed families to continue their services without interruption.

With continued guidance from the CDC, local public health departments and expert epidemiologists, we gradually reopened our three centers with new safety procedures while continuing to offer tele-therapy. Emergency relief funds from our community have been essential. From technology upgrades for tele-therapy support to personalized protective equipment (PPE) for our clinicians, local foundations have helped ensure the healthy outcomes for our clients, their families, and our staff.

*As an organization serving a vulnerable population, we need to be extremely conscientious. Without the appropriate masks, shields, and gowns, our staff would not have been able to come back. We would not have been able to open without it.*

Additional grant funding has also allowed us to support our families' mental health needs while at home. When children's behaviors became more disruptive at home, remote learning seemed impossible, or anxiety over family members' compromised immune systems became overwhelming to navigate, we provided assistance and solutions. Families are finding with all the uncertainty in their children's lives, we are their constant.

Vicki wrote me to share this very thought, and her gratitude for our tele-therapy services for her sixteen-year-old daughter. "Kate will not be returning to school and we are now depending on Easterseals even more. Thank you for being our constant during all of this. Her therapists are so kind and understanding. Without Easterseals we know Kate would have regressed."

We are bolstered by your support and the signal it sends. Our community is still here for us.

*Theresa*

Theresa Forthofer  
President & CEO



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## Virtual Volunteerism

Corporate partner, Exelon Generation enhanced their summer intern program by participating in the first-ever Easterseals Buddy Program. Fifteen Exelon interns teamed up with seven children involved in our Virtual Run for the Kids and helped cheer them toward their summer therapy goals! The interactions included personal notes, motivating videos and virtual meetings. The special group bonded over pets, food and common interests.

Exelon is an incredible partner to Easterseals, supporting our Assistive Technology Program and annual events such as our Benefit Gala and Photography Exhibition. They are now forming a disability awareness and advocacy group within their office. We hope to expand this Buddy Program so that more corporate partners can begin important conversations on inclusion and disability awareness.

Other local groups and individuals have engaged in remote and socially distanced volunteering by leading virtual activities and read-alouds for children in our Lily Garden Child Care Center, helping with outdoor landscaping projects and promoting virtual events.

For more information about virtual volunteer opportunities, Contact Courtney Bronec at [cbronec@eastersealsdfvr.org](mailto:cbronec@eastersealsdfvr.org).

## Special Events Round Up

We are grateful to all of the sponsors, guests, participants and supporters who have been quick to embrace our shift to virtual events. Learn more about upcoming special events at [eastersealsdfvr.org/events](https://eastersealsdfvr.org/events)

### Virtual Gala Recap



We are humbled by the outpouring of generosity that kept us all connected even when we were apart. As the state shut down, we moved our annual gala, set for March 21, to a virtual event within days.

The enthusiastic participation from hundreds of virtual guests helped support our transition to tele-therapy and **raised \$445,000 (net)** to kick-start our recovery efforts.

### Thank You Superheroes



While our superhero theme is a constant of our annual Run for the Kids, it meant even more to us this year. Nearly 500 people donated, ran, walked or rolled across 20 states in our Virtual Superhero Hustle on August 1.

New goals were set and our teams raised **more than \$51,000 (net!)** to help children with developmental delays and disabilities!

### Cycle of Support



The response to our Virtual Bike for the Kids was greater than we ever imagined. Throughout September, dedicated cyclists and teams raised more than \$20,000 and rode hundreds of miles to support our therapies and services.

Many children at Easterseals developed their cycling skills with the help of their physical therapists, including our five 2020 adapted bike recipients who received a bicycle customized to meet their needs.

### Presenting the Children's Showcase



This year's event will look different but the chance to celebrate the children we serve continues. Honor the 40th year of this special event when it takes to the screen. Subscribe to the Children's Showcase

YouTube channel for access to a video collection of amazing talents and achievements, take a chance in our raffle, or make plans to host a fundraising party. Learn more at [eastersealsdfvr.org/showcase](https://eastersealsdfvr.org/showcase).

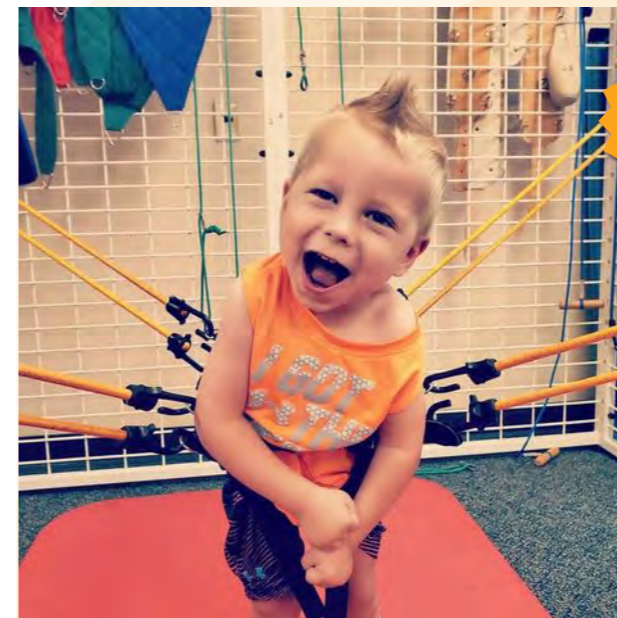
## #GIVINGTUESDAY

**Tuesday, December 1**

Mark your calendars for this global day of giving! Show your support for the children who need our services by helping to raise a record breaking \$200,000!

Follow along with @eastersealsdfvr throughout the day to unlock bonus matches from individual and corporate partners.

Contact Kelly at [kmoreland@eastersealsdfvr.org](mailto:kmoreland@eastersealsdfvr.org) to learn more, pledge your support and request a Giving Tuesday fundraiser toolkit.



**\$100,000 GOAL  
+ \$100,000 MATCH**

Help us reach **\$200,000**  
on December 1st

**♥ ALL DONATIONS WILL BE MATCHED!**