

ANNUAL
COMMUNITY REPORT

PREPARED BY:
THE BOARD
OF DIRECTORS



Congenital Heart Defect
FAMILIES OF TUCSON

2023



CHD FAMILIES OF TUCSON

LETTER FROM THE BOARD

As you read through this community report and turn every page, you are going to notice a consistent theme of transition. This is something our families feel more strongly the day they are given a diagnosis of their child's heart defect as the road ahead is just...*different*. We also can relate similarly at CHD Families of Tucson as we continue to grow and evolve with our membership, programs, and community engagement. We try to embrace every opportunity to develop and serve the needs of our families in whatever form that looks like.

As heart parents, we have to learn how to pivot on a dime, adapt quickly, and adjust in ways that most parents won't experience. 7 short years ago, there wasn't an organization in existence, in Southern Arizona, for heart families to find support like ours provides and do what we do. We help ease those major life transitions through our emotional, financial, and educational support and we will continue to grow and progress in all these areas.

We are now seeing some of our 'young adolescents' wanting to take on their own care, educate themselves on what it means to be a 'heart kid,' and expand upon all that knowledge. We have plans to help these kids transition into this next phase of life and we look forward to what this next year brings for all of us, as we reflect on all our blessings that happened in 2023. As you read the story on the next page, you may want to grab the tissue box. It resonates so deeply of living a life as a heart family.

Sincerely,

CHD Families of Tucson Board of Directors

Stacy Lipinczyk

Caroline Ordoñez

Becky Lococo

Rachel Simmons

Kim Levin

Jessica Graves

CHD FAMILIES OF TUCSON

WELCOME TO HOLLAND

by Emily Perl Kingsley

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip – to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum. The Michelangelo David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland."

"Holland?!?" you say. "What do you mean Holland?? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy."

But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.

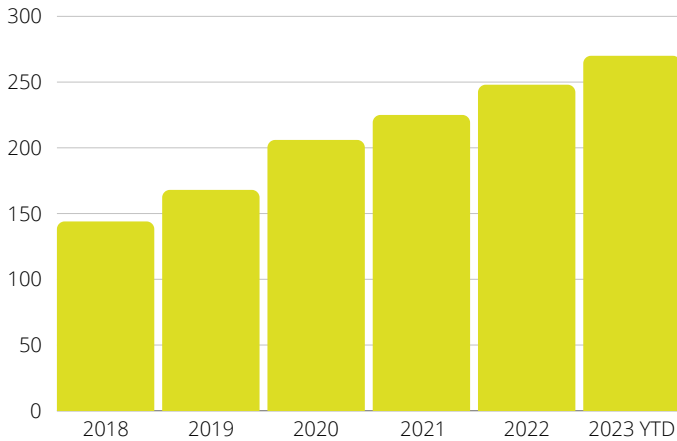
It's just a different place. It's slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around.... and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills....and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy... and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say "Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned."

And the pain of that will never, ever, ever, ever go away... because the loss of that dream is a very very significant loss.

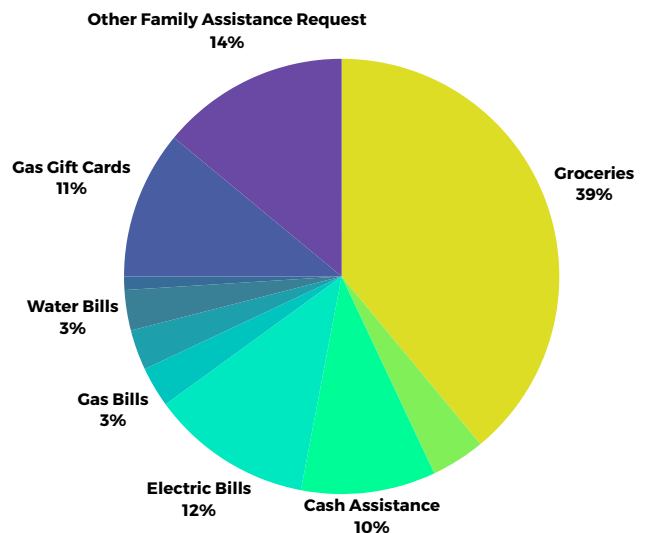
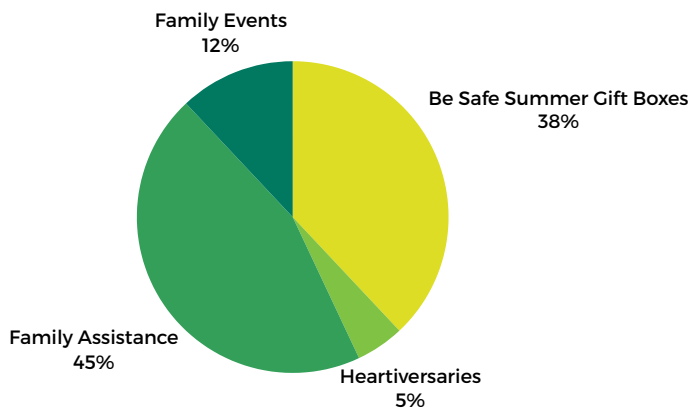
But... if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things ... about Holland.

GROWTH MEMBERSHIP



We have seen steady growth within our organization over the last 6 years with a majority of our referrals being made internally by heart families, or by local doctors, nurses, and social workers. Our families are eager to share our information and resources when they meet other parents of heart warriors. We consider these referrals a huge compliment and we take great pride in knowing that we are a trusted resource for Southern Arizona Heart Families.

BY THE NUMBERS FINANCIAL SUMMARY



CHD Families of Tucson spent nearly \$20,000 on Southern Arizona heart families. Having spent close to 50% of our program spending, our Family Assistance Program has had its most successful year. Our second most successful program was our Be Safe Summer Gift Boxes, where we provide heart families with essential items to beat the Arizona summer heat! As always, CHDFT, on behalf of our families, is so grateful to the generous donors who make these programs possible. We truly would not be in a position to serve Southern Arizona heart families without your continued support.

PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGISTS OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA



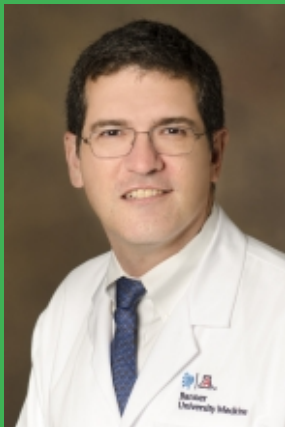
DR. JOHNSON
Phoenix Children's Specialty Care



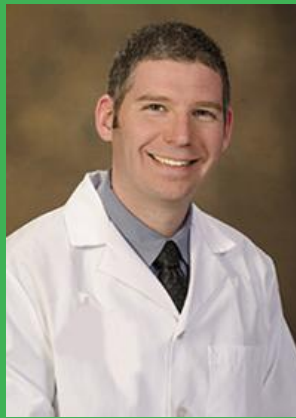
DR. MACIAS
Phoenix Children's Specialty Care



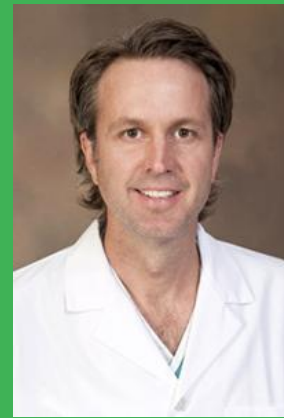
DR. BLAIR
Tucson Pediatric Cardiology



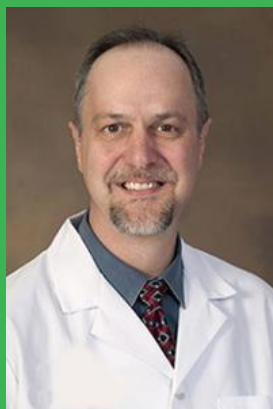
DR. FOX
Banner Health



DR. SECKELER
Banner Health



DR. BARBER
Banner Health



DR. KLEWER
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DR. MEZIAB
Banner Health



DR. HOYER
Banner Health

OUR COMMUNITY

EVENTS & PROGRAMS

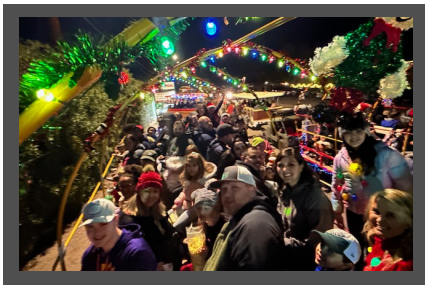
♥ Be Safe Summer Boxes

The Board of Directors (and some pint-sized volunteers) helped us assemble 96 summer safety packs this year as we carried out our favorite CHDFT tradition - Be Safe Summer Bags! Toothbrushes, toothpaste, sunscreen, UPF rash guards, sun hats and other goodies filled our insulated tote bags to help keep the dangers of Arizona summer at bay. In partnership with our longtime friends at Chick-fil-A on Ina, we held a pickup event where we distributed the bags and provided gift cards so each family could have a warm meal.



♥ HOLIDAY HAYRIDE

In December, we gathered for a private hayride through the famous Winterhaven Festival of Lights. Thanks to a generous wagon donation from Winterhaven Rides, we sang carols, sipped hot chocolate, and soaked in the holiday spirit from thousands of twinkling lights and festive displays as the wagon meandered through the neighborhood.



♥ HEARTS IN THE PARK

We celebrated Heart Week 2023 with our Hearts in the Park community outreach event. On a cool February Saturday, our heart families from all over Southern Arizona met at Crossroads at Silverbell District Park for food and fun as we celebrated our heart warriors and CHD community. While the kiddos played in the bounce house and on the playground, parents had an opportunity to meet and mingle and share their stories with one another.



♥ Heart Walk

On April 22nd, CHD Families of Tucson joined in with the greater cardiac community for the American Heart Association's 2023 Southern Arizona Heart Walk. We celebrated the survivors of cardiac disease, walked in memory of our warrior angels, and advocated in the fight against heart disease.



Continued Programs

♥ Heartiversary Certificates

Every year we recognize our Heart Warriors on the date of their open heart surgery with a certificate and Target gift card. This program is volunteer led by our CHD allies: Carly & her Gramee Paula.

♥ Levin Family Assistance Fund

We cover costs of basic essential needs for our heart families, so they can care for their medically fragile child. Volunteer led by, Kimberlee Levin.

♥ Angel Warrior Program

Our warriors that have gone before us are remembered by a personalized wind chime given to their family. Led by volunteer angel mom, Jennifer Wittman.

FROM OUR HEARTS TO YOURS

A Story About the Morales Family

We were amazed to find out that we were going to have a bundle of joy, a gift brought to us. But unknowingly that gift became a pair. We weren't prepared for the news that was to follow. One of the twins had congenital heart defects. Clouded and confused about what to do next we were guided and shown the possibilities of hope. We were told about an organization available to support us, CHD Families of Tucson.

When our bundles of joy were born June 2018 tears rolled down our eyes as waterfall down a mountain. We were told Amaris was born with Tetralogy of Fallot and Pulmonary Atresia. We did not know what to do or expect. CHD Families of Tucson sent a basket to the NICU as a warm welcoming to our family. This lightened the stress and anxiety, and we no longer felt so alone in this new journey. We felt hopeful and thankful. In August, Amaris was transferred to Phoenix Children's Hospital to have surgery. By September 4th, 2018, Amaris went through her first open heart surgery with Dr. Velez. We were ecstatic to hear of a great surgery and hopeful for a great recovery. CHD Families of Tucson helped us through that challenge and our family held on to happiness and we were full of loving prayers.

She is our glue and light. We never would have imagined how big and silly of a personality she would have developed. I was not ready for the joys and laughter she would bring to the world. You never would have known the surgery she went through with that energy held in that tiny body and big soul, but I'll tell you one thing, she is a firecracker and isn't scared to show it. She is very energetic and loves making new friends, or as she calls them all, her "best friends."

March 6, 2023, was the date of her most recent surgery. Thinking we were prepared was an overstatement. With her knowing the joy of fun and freedom brought us to our knees to see her in so much distress about her not being able to enjoy her freedom of jumping and doing all the fun things she loves. But once again the support we received was astounding. Amaris has been through a lot, we as a family have been through a lot, but as always CHD Families of Tucson has been there to lend a hand, give an ear, and support the needs of our warrior. We thank you from bottom of our hearts for everything you do for all of the CHD Families in our community.



SUPPORT YOUR SOUTHERN ARIZONA HEART COMMUNITY TAX CREDIT

CHD FAMILIES OF TUCSON
IS A QUALIFYING CHARITABLE
ORGANIZATION (QCO CODE 22013).

If you donate to CHDFT, your donation is a dollar-for-dollar tax credit, so the donation will come right off of your Arizona state taxes! Any Arizona taxpayer can donate to CHDFT and take advantage of this tax credit.

Your gift will help keep the lights on, water running, air conditioning going, provide groceries, and more for Southern Arizona children with congenital heart defects as well as their families going through difficult times due to their CHDs.

To claim this credit, use Form 321*.

Best of all? You can donate to a qualifying charitable organization, like CHDFT, in addition to donating to a qualifying foster care organization, or any public school!**

*THE MAXIMUM QUALIFYING CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION CREDIT ALLOWED IS \$938 FOR MARRIED FILING JOINT FILERS AND \$470 FOR SINGLE, HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD, AND MARRIED FILING SEPARATE FILERS.

**CHDFT CANNOT AND DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY TAX ADVICE. PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR OWN TAX ADVISOR.

CHD Families of Tucson is a recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
Need a tax deduction? Visit our website www.chdtucson.org



Congenital Heart Defect
FAMILIES OF TUCSON



2024 contribution amounts have increased!
\$470 for individual
\$938 for married/filing jointly

YOUR AZ TAX CREDIT ELIGIBLE
DONATION CAN BE MAILED TO:

CHD FAMILIES OF TUCSON
PO BOX 91324
TUCSON, AZ 85752



Want to donate right now?

Use your smartphone or mobile device to scan this code. You will be directed straight to our secure online donation page.

You can also visit us at:
www.chdtucson.org/donate/