



Wish Organizations

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Wish organizations were developed for children with life-threatening medical conditions who are between the ages of 2 ½ and under the age of 18 at the time of referral. Most wish organizations require contact with the child's treating physician to determine if the child is medically eligible for a wish. No child can receive a second wish from any wish organization once a wish has been granted by another organization. Some wish organizations do grant wishes for adults who have six (6) months to live, if they have never had a wish as a child.

As a parent, thinking about contacting a wish organization may be a frightening or heartbreaking thought. A parent might believe that contacting this type of organization means that you must accept the fact that your child is going to die. This is not true! Wish organizations are designed to give a child hope when dealing with medical issues, to give a child a break from the day-to-day medical issues, and to just enjoy childhood. Another concern might be that accepting a wish could prevent another child from receiving their wish. Again, not true! Most wish organizations are well-funded and diligently search for children who qualify for their services.

Contacting a Wish Organization

Most wish organizations have websites that, as a parent, you can use to refer your child. Your doctor can also refer your child. Once a wish organization receives the referral, it will be processed to ensure the child medically qualifies and to assign them wish granters (note: MPS and related disorders DO qualify with most wish organizations). This process can take up to 2-12 months, depending on the wish organization.

Once the wish child has been medically approved and the wish granters are assigned, the wish organization will contact the parents via mail or phone. The wish granters will then contact the parents to schedule the first meeting.

What to expect during the first meeting

The first meeting should be a happy time for both the wish child and the parents. Most wish granters are volunteers and are excited to make your child's wish come true. The first meeting is designed to learn about the child and make the child's wish come true. It is also the paperwork meeting.

Most wish granters will request that both parents attend this meeting. If you are a single, divorced, widowed, a grandparent, or have any other special situation, please make the wish granter aware of this. For most wish granters, they have heard it all and will just need to bring a different form. So do not be shy.

If your child can communicate their wish

Normally one wish granter will help fill out the wish paperwork with your child as the other wish granter helps you to complete the parent paperwork. This is designed to make the meeting a fun event for the child. Below are questions that might be asked during the first meeting and the documents that will be needed.

Questions for the wish child

I wish to have.... What makes you want this more than anything else?

I wish to meet... Why do you want to meet this person?

I wish to be... What is so special that you want to be this?

I wish to go... What do you want to do if you go there?

Parent information for first meeting

You will need a list of family members who are under 18 who will attend the wish with your child, their birth certificates, and identifications. Be prepared to share your child's story. Some wish organizations ask you to write something about your child, and some may ask you to tell them verbally about your child. This serves two purposes: it helps the wish granter to learn about your wonderful child and also to help fund your child's wish.

If your child cannot communicate their wish

Most wish organizations do NOT turn down children because they cannot verbally communicate their wish. Wish granters rely on the parents to learn about the child and what their likes and wishes are, so think very hard about what would make your child happy. Let them learn about your child at the first meeting. Understanding what the child's favorite movies are and/or characters are perfect examples. Your wish granter and you, the parent, will come up with a wonderful wish that will make your child happy!

Granting a Wish

Depending on the wish, this can take months or years. Factors include: the child's doctor's recommendation, the child's schedule, the child's wish, and available funding. Most wishes are granted within a year.

Celebrating the Wish

Most wish organizations plan a wish reveal event to get the child excited about the wish, to finish the paperwork, and ensure the parents have all the information about the wish. This fun event is normally held one to four weeks before the wish.

Wish Day

If your child's wish includes travel, you know this can sometimes be an issue. Wish organizations are prepared to deal with most medical issues. Please read the factsheet about traveling with MPS and related diseases. Please make sure you read the wish organization travel information thoroughly. Most wish organizations plan for issues that may arise, but they cannot plan for everything. Have your contact and emergency fact sheet, doctor's information and all medications list with you.

Remember to take lots of pictures and celebrate the wish! Your child and your family will remember this wish forever. Happy Wish Day!

National Wish Organization for Children- www.wish.org

National Wish Organization for Adults- www.dreamfoundation.org

Other organizations may be available within your state.