



MEDIA RELEASE

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Starlight rockets into more hospitals with Planet Starlight launch

[Starlight Children's Foundation](#) (Starlight) has launched [Planet Starlight](#), an innovative and interactive virtual platform designed to deliver engaging, positive distraction for sick kids in every hospital in Australia. Anywhere, anytime... at the click of a button.

Every minute of every day, a child is admitted to hospital in Australia. In that moment, they often receive a diagnosis which turns their world upside down. Suddenly, smiles disappear, and life is filled with hospital, doctors, needles and pain. That's where Starlight steps in - to bring happiness to sick kids when they need it most.

With the launch of Planet Starlight, the organisation can now deliver happiness to even more hospitalised children, especially in Australia's general and regional hospitals where children's support services can be limited. Free to register and easily accessible from an internet-enabled device, Planet Starlight features daily, interactive livestreams uniquely shaped by the participation of the kids watching and hosted by Starlight's superhero of fun, [Captain Starlight](#). Hospitalised kids lead the play, participating in challenges, quizzes and can even share their creations in a virtual art gallery.

Planet Starlight was first trialed during the COVID-19 pandemic, when some of the most significant restrictions in children's healthcare required Starlight to come up with innovative ways to deliver essential programs to isolated, hospitalised kids in any way they could. A virtual Starlight program was designed and delivered in a number of hospitals, where evidence confirmed the power of this live, interactive digital platform where kids led the play.

Planet Starlight trials earned Starlight the [2020 AFR Most Innovative Organisation Award](#) and a grant from [TPG Telecom Foundation](#) funded the development of the final platform.

Starlight CEO, Louise Baxter, said: "Starlight is uniquely positioned and excited to launch Planet Starlight with a goal to reach sick kids at every hospital in Australia. Planet Starlight takes Starlight into the virtual world for hospitalised kids in need of happiness and positive distraction. Whenever they need it and wherever they are. Children are digital natives, so it's no surprise Planet Starlight has really taken off!"

Baxter continues, "Thank you to TPG Telecom Foundation for enabling Starlight to take this important innovation from trial to reality."

Jacqueline Brewer, Head of TPG Telecom Foundation, said "We understand the importance of connection and our purpose is to support charities like Starlight in creating scalable technology that can make a difference to communities across the country.

"We're proud to see Planet Starlight rolling out to 19 hospitals in metropolitan and regional areas across Australia. The platform is a fantastic example of using technology to overcome barriers such as location, time and health conditions of a child. Planet Starlight gives Captain Starlight the power to reach more sick kids and create a positive health experience at anytime and anywhere."

Starlight acknowledges and pays respect to the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work, live and play.





Thanks to the TPG Telecom Foundation's grant, kids in regional and general hospitals, as well as kids too sick to attend a Starlight Express Room in a metro children's hospital, now have ongoing access to the fun, joy and laughter Captain Starlight creates through the Planet Starlight platform.

The platform was developed by [Future Friendly](#), who have developed many children's apps and has been designed inclusively for kids so that age, development, and ability are not barriers to a great experience.

The platform has been rolled out to patients in 19 metro and regional hospitals across Australia since its launch in November, with another 20 nationwide planned by June 2023.

Find out more about Planet Starlight [here](#).

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About Starlight Children's Foundation :

Starlight Children's Foundation brightens the lives of seriously ill and hospitalised children and young people by replacing pain, fear and stress with fun, joy and laughter. Since its establishment in 1988, Starlight has expanded to become the broadest reaching children's charity in Australia, and was awarded the number one most reputable children's charity in Reptrak's 2022 Charity Reputation Index. There is a Starlight Express Room in every children's hospital across Australia and over 140 Captain Starlight's nationwide, who made 186 trips to remote communities in 2022. Starlight created over 1,303, 775 positive Starlight experiences for children, teenagers and their families in 2022. Last year, Starlight granted 507 wishes and this year, Starlight will grant its 13,000th Starlight Wish. www.starlight.org.au



About the TPG Telecom Foundation:

Celebrating 21 years in Australia, TPG Telecom Foundation TPG Telecom's charitable arm. The Foundation's purpose is to create opportunities to improve the health, wellbeing and education of Australian communities in need. It supports TPG Telecom's commitment to its purpose, to build meaningful relationships and support vibrant, connected communities.

Community investment through the Foundation plays an important role in TPG Telecom's overall approach to operating a sustainable business. The Foundation partners with DGR1 charitable organisations to fund specific projects with clearly defined objectives. In the last 12 months, TPG Telecom Foundation onboarded seven new charity partners who wish to incorporate technology in their projects to achieve scalable outcomes for communities in need.

In 2022, TPG Telecom Foundation donated over \$1 million to charity partners and launched TPG Telecom Giving, where 193 employees donated 722 hours of support to a charity of their choice. The Foundation has donated more than \$26 million to date to charitable causes and organisations using mobile technology.

