



MEDIA RELEASE

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Help make hospital a happy place this Starlight Day

Australia's broadest reaching children's charity, [Starlight Children's Foundation](https://www.starlight.org.au) (Starlight) hopes to raise \$1.1 million by the end of June to help make hospital a happy place for sick kids and their families. The fundraising appeal launches on **Starlight Day (Wednesday 25 May)** and funds raised will help keep Starlight's vital hospital services running.

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 why Starlight exists - to bring happiness to sick kids when they need it most.

Funds raised this Starlight Day will support more than 28,000 sick kids through Starlight's vital hospital programs, including [Captain Starlight](#) and the [Starlight Express Rooms](#).

The devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic and the heavy restrictions that come with it have further isolated children and families already facing the unimaginable challenges that serious illness brings. The need for Starlight's vital hospital services has never been greater, delivering happiness to seriously ill children and their families – like Henry Jenkins (pictured).

Since being diagnosed with Stage 5 Nephroblastoma (Wilms Tumor kidney cancer) in 2020, five-year-old Henry's life has been consumed by hospitals. Having been admitted during strict COVID-19 lockdown, the Starlight Express Room at the hospital provided respite for Henry and his family during what was a tumultuous time filled with painful procedures, surgery and chemotherapy.

"Starlight brings happiness and sparkle to an otherwise scary experience. They provide fun and distraction for kids which helps pave the way for better coping with treatment - something we know firsthand," says Henry's Mum, Jade Jenkins.

Starlight CEO, Louise Baxter, said: "The need to bring joy and positive distraction to sick kids in hospital has never been greater. Starlight is there to transform the hospital experience, to overcome the social isolation of serious illness and provide moments of fun ensuring sick kids can be kids."

"We would not exist without the generosity of individuals, the community and organisations so this Starlight Day, we ask you to dig deep so we can continue to make hospitals a happy place for sick kids."

To allow people to make an even greater impact this year, Starlight is introducing its "Double your Impact for Sick Kids' initiative" whereby donations made on Starlight Day (25 May) will be matched by corporate partners and a philanthropist.



Alongside this, Starlight's corporate partners including Cashrewards, Chevron, Repco and Wizard Pharmacy have planned a variety of initiatives and activations through the month of May to help to bring smiles to sick kids this Starlight Day!

For more information on Starlight Children's Foundation, to donate or find out more about the Starlight Day partner initiatives, please visit www.starlight.org.au

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For all media enquiries, please contact:

Brodie Beel
Alt/Shift
brodie@altshift.com.au
0432 386 518

Joey Gan
Alt/Shift
joey@altshift.com.au
0406 624 982

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 2021 Charity Reputation Index. There is now a Starlight Express Room in every major children's hospital across Australia and 176 Captain Starlights nationwide. In 2021, Starlight granted over 300,000 positive Starlight experiences for children, teenagers and their families and nearly 800,000 Fun with Captain Starlight experiences. This year, Starlight will grant its 12,000th Starlight Wish. www.starlight.org.au

