

The Toy Foundation Funds Nemours \$825,000 to Date

Second phase of research green-lighted to help sick kids cope in hospitals

The Toy Foundation (TTF) has awarded a second grant of \$425,000 to the Center for Healthcare Delivery Science (CHDS), a part of Nemours Children's Health System. TTF, the philanthropic arm of the North American toy industry, is supporting Nemours' work on a multi-phase research project to explore the impact of trauma-informed patient care and the role of play in helping children and families heal and cope with medical conditions and treatments.

An initial grant of \$400,000 from TTF helped fund Phase 1 of the research, which was conducted last year. Phase 1 gathered the perspectives of patients, families, and health care providers at Nemours/Alfred I. du Pont Hospital for Children (N/AIDHC), Wilmington, DE, and Nemours Children's Hospital, Orlando, FL, regarding the need for, and best ways to deliver, trauma-informed pediatric patient care - an approach that is responsive to the impact of trauma on children and families in health care settings.

Phase 2, which began in January, will build upon the data already collected and focus on piloting specific ways to use play as an intervention to lessen the traumatic nature of medical events or prevent traumatic stress in children. The idea is to emphasize physical and emotional safety through play to help patients and their families rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

"As health care providers, we can and must improve our responsiveness to children and their families who are going through or at risk for traumatic experiences," said lead researcher Anne Kazak, PhD, co-director of Nemours CHDS (at right in photo). "With the support of The Toy Foundation, Nemours is excited to work towards shifting the culture in children's hospitals, enabling more young patients and families to build strength and resilience in the face of adversity."

"The Toy Foundation was built on the notion that play heals, comforts, and supports children who are living through unbelievably stressful circumstances," said Jean Butler, executive director of TTF (at left in photo). "That's why our groundbreaking partnership with Nemours is so important. Once established, the pilot program will allow us to reach a very vulnerable population of sick children and their families. With Phase 2 of research now underway, we are one step closer to bringing the many benefits of play into these children's lives."

The effort funded by The Toy Foundation is led by a collaborative team at Nemours – including the Center for Healthcare Delivery Sciences, KidsHealth, and the Child Life Program at N/AIDHC. Dr. Kazak continues to lead the project, in collaboration with Jennifer Sciolla, MS, director of Child Life, N/AIDHC, and Melissa Alderfer, PhD, and Jessica Pierce, PhD, of CHDS.

[The Toy Foundation \(TTF\)](#) is a 501c3 children's charity whose mission is to provide joy and comfort to children in need through the experience of toys and play. TTF serves children who are coping with serious illness, enduring temporary home placements in the foster care system, suffering from abuse or neglect, experiencing separation from a deployed military parent, or dealing with devastating natural disasters. To date, TTF's signature program, The Toy Bank, has provided \$200 million in toys to 24 million children in need around the globe, thanks to its generous toy industry donors.

Nemours is an internationally recognized children's health system that owns and operates the [Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children](#) in Wilmington, Del., and [Nemours Children's Hospital](#) in Orlando, Fla., along with outpatient facilities in six states, delivering pediatric primary, specialty and urgent care. Nemours also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, KidsHealth.org and offers on-demand, online video patient visits through Nemours CareConnect.

Established as [The Nemours Foundation](#) through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, Nemours provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy, and prevention programs to families in the communities it serves.

