

The Next Chapter





“Edmarc helped my child feel like a kid. It’s more than simple care, it’s holistic care. It’s compassion.”

- Aubree Midgett,
Jackson’s Mom



“Edmarc was our anchor. The buffer that allowed us to breathe and say, ‘we can do this.’”

- Liz Visalden, Sammie’s Mom



“Edmarc stepped into our lives and all of a sudden I had incredible support. They were like fairy Godmothers. I felt empowered and went on to live a life that wasn’t perfect for everyone, but it was our life and perfect for us.”

- Wendy Mezzenga, Maddie’s Mom



Cody is hurt...
is scared...
is sick...

Together, we can change his world.

Every year, 27,000 children in Virginia are diagnosed with a life-threatening condition. For these children and their families, life changes forever with a diagnosis. Their lives consist of tests, hospital visits, and constant questions. Although this is their difficult reality, Edmarc is there to partner with them and provide support to help make their journey as comfortable as possible.

When Edmarc started as a small grassroots effort in 1978, it was the first children's hospice charity model program of its kind in the country. Over the years, we grew to meet the need and still today there are few organizations like ours. It is a hard field supporting children and families in the most critical time in their lives. It is hard emotionally and physically, but what we do is unparalleled. There is no recipe for grief or life care. We know each child and family and understand their unique needs. This individualized approach is what makes Edmarc different.

Currently, we serve between 70 and 80 children (280 individuals, including their families) a month in our clinical program and 164 families (575 individuals) in our bereavement program.

By providing nursing care and support services in the comfort of families' homes, Edmarc helps to reduce the stress and strain that comes with institutionalizing children in hospitals. Edmarc focuses on the long term. What we do affects our entire community because

Edmarc keeps families together.

Edmarc's support for families reduces the strain on social services and other local programs for which families would have to access to get the support they need and to stay intact.

Our vision is a community in which no child or family is denied pediatric hospice services and palliative care. By expanding our current service area to Williamsburg, Gloucester, Mathews, and surrounding counties, 100 more kids a year could be served, 100 more kids could receive the care they desperately need, 100 more kids could experience life outside of a hospital, and 100 families could live and stay together.

We provide health care the way it should be.

Doing what's needed, when it's needed, and regardless of the family's ability to pay.

It takes an entire community. Edmarc's services are completely free to families because of the generosity of our donors. We need your support and would desire to partner with you to help more families. The most powerful thing we have in life is the ability to build relationships and connect to each other. Let's build relationships to help our children in need in our community.

Debbie Stitzer-Brame, Edmarc's Executive Director

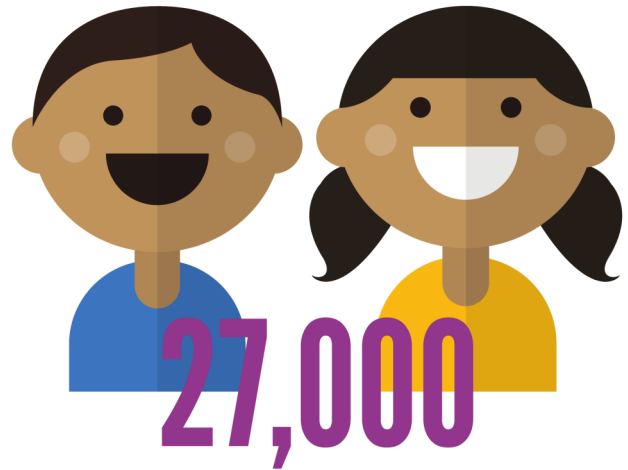


280

individuals served
through Edmarc's
clinical programs

575

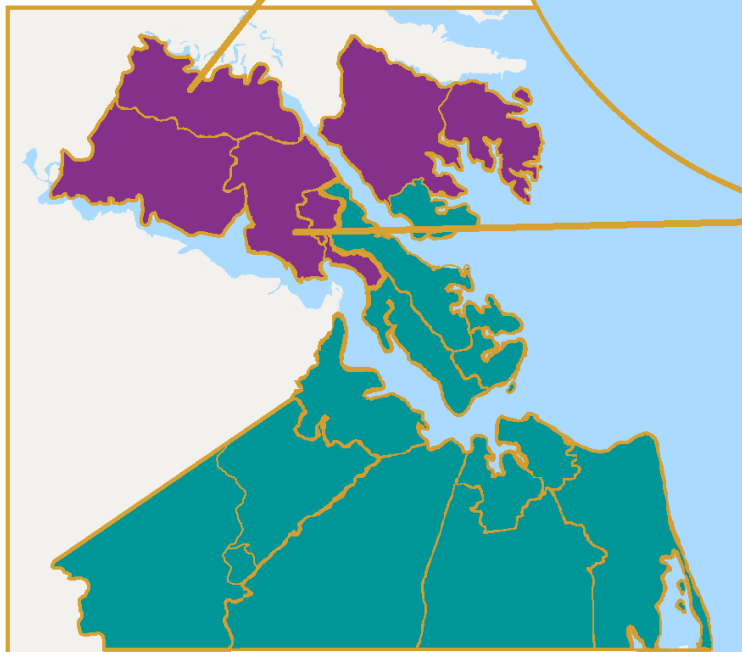
individuals served in
Edmarc's
bereavement
program



children are diagnosed with a
life-threatening condition
in Virginia every year.

Expanding:

Charles City, Gloucester,
James City, Mathews, New
Kent, Williamsburg



Current Service Area:

Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton,
Isle of Wight, Newport News,
Norfolk, Portsmouth, Smithfield,
Southampton, Suffolk, Virginia
Beach, York

Jackson found hope at the age of three;

because at that age, Jackson found Edmarc. Being chronically ill since birth, he spent years in and out of hospitals, seeing multiple specialty doctors, yet receiving no real answers. During his short life he has had many diagnoses including Mitochondrial Disease, Dysautonomia, and Intestinal Failure.

“Edmarc was an immediate blessing,”

states Jackson’s mother, Aubree. “Edmarc does not just help Jackson, they help the entire family. The difference is the people. They understand the process. They are here for the kids. They get on Jackson’s level. They talk to him and they *know* him. You feel nothing but compassion when working with the people at Edmarc. They provide holistic care. They do not just fix a need but understand the intricacies of a child and family living with a chronic illness.”

Jackson, now five, continues to receive services from Edmarc including on-call 24-hour nursing services and biweekly in-home visits with an Edmarc social worker. The family has made close friends and connections, which has allowed Jackson to simply be a kid.

He is safe, included, and ready to take on the world.

All Jackson has known is illness. He understands he is sick and that his illness is not going away. However, his illness does not define him. Edmarc has given Jackson a safe space to be a kid where he can play with friends who are just like him. Edmarc turns sadness into joy. Edmarc is family. Edmarc is Jackson’s hope.



Sammie was a fighter.

Every breath was a fight, but she was a fighter. Her life expectancy kept getting pushed from one week, to one month, to one year, and so forth. Sammie was diagnosed at birth with Trisomy-13, a chromosomal disorder that caused severe intellectual and physical complications to Sammie's life.

According to Sammie's mom,

“Our god send came in the form of a phone call from Edmarc.

That phone call changed our lives. Edmarc began providing services to Sammie at the age of one and from the moment they arrived, they took over and allowed me to simply breathe and be Sammie's mom. They were always a phone call away. Edmarc was by our side for over 16 years, and through that time the nursing and support services changed to meet Sammie's specific needs. The one thing that never changed was their compassion.

Edmarc provided the support that gave our family peace.

I would dread the holidays. I would cringe when we got to the colder months because I knew Sammie would get pneumonia and end up in the ICU. When we arrived home after being discharged, there would be a basket with a turkey, food or presents for the entire family. I didn't have to worry. Every family with a terminally ill child lives on the edge and always wonders, 'Is this the day?' Edmarc took care of everything around us to allow us to be a family."

At the age of 17, Sammie died in her home from a heart attack. "I prepared for 17 years, but nothing prepares you for losing a child. It was a shock to the entire system, but Edmarc was there all along. From the moment Edmarc came into our family, they took care of all that needed to be done." As a result, the family was able to grieve.

Even now, 11 years since their daughter has passed, Sammie's family still receives bereavement services from Edmarc. What Edmarc understands is that grieving has no end date. Edmarc represents family, and they will always be part of the families they serve.



**To the very end,
Edmarc is there.**

Hospice takes many roles. Compassion, empathy, and experience to know what is needed for a family are at the heart of Edmarc's work. While the rest of the medical field focuses on giving patients more time to live, Edmarc focuses on honoring the time left and making the quality of that time be as good as it can be. "Edmarc helped our family make the most of the time we had with our daughter, and I will always be thankful."

Give more children hope for the journey!

"Having a child with a life-threatening illness can be a lonely journey. Edmarc was formed so that no family would ever feel they were alone in their journey." Joan Hogge



The next chapter

In 1978, Joan and Allen Hogge needed hospice support for their son, Marcus. Because of that need, a grassroots effort of dedicated volunteers formed Edmarc. Now, more than 40 years later, Edmarc has an opportunity to expand its service area to reach 100 more children and families who are in critical need of our services. Because our team provides physician-directed care in the comfort of families' homes 24 hours a day, seven days a week, it is essential to have an office and staffing located within the expansion region.

We need your help!

Help us turn this vision into a reality by supporting the **\$2 million campaign** to extend our current service area into Williamsburg, Gloucester, Mathews, and the surrounding counties. With your help, we can fund the infrastructure necessary to provide Edmarc's full range of services at no cost to families and ensure they receive care where and when they need it most.

After all these years, Joan and Allen Hogge are still serving on Edmarc's Board of Directors and are part of the campaign team shaping our future. Won't you join them in making a meaningful gift to change lives for years to come?

"We have been overwhelmed by the support of the Hampton Roads community that has resulted in the expansion of Edmarc's programs well beyond its roots in Suffolk. We are excited about further growth into the greater Williamsburg area."

Allen Hogge



Stay Connected



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Our Mission:

Edmarc seeks to ease the trauma of a child's illness or death, and to reduce the disabling effects of pediatric illness, loss and bereavement on families in Hampton Roads.

