



Make-A-Wish Foundation® Fast Facts

- The Make-A-Wish Foundation of America was founded in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1980. The largest wish-granting organization in the world, the Foundation has granted the wishes of more than 174,000 children with life-threatening medical conditions nationwide.
- The Make-A-Wish Foundation's national office is located in Phoenix. The 66 Make-A-Wish® chapters in the United States and the U.S. territories of Guam and Puerto Rico enable the Foundation to serve children in every U.S. community.
- The Make-A-Wish Foundation relies on the grassroots support of more than 26,000 volunteers to deliver the organization's mission. Volunteers serve Make-A-Wish chapters in a variety of capacities, including wish granting, office administrative support, special event planning and coordinating, fundraising and much more.
- The Make-A-Wish Foundation grants a wish every 40 minutes.
- To qualify for a wish, the child must be older than 2½ years old and younger than 18 (at the time of referral) and must not have received a wish from another wish-granting organization. A child can be referred to the Make-A-Wish Foundation by a parent or guardian, a medical professional, or by the child.
- Following referral, a physician must certify that the child has a life-threatening medical condition. There are no other qualifications based on sex, race, religion, socioeconomic status or any other demographic category.
- Typically children's wishes fall into four categories: *To Be* (e.g., a zookeeper, a firefighter, a baker), *To Meet* (e.g., a favorite celebrity or athlete), *To Have* (e.g., a computer, a playhouse, a puppy), or *To Go* (e.g., to a theme park, Hawaii, a major sporting event).
- In fiscal year 2008, the Foundation granted 13,425 wishes, the most ever in its 28-year history. More than 41 percent of the wishes were for visits to a theme park, followed by 18.5 percent for travel-related and cruise wishes, 11.6 percent for shopping sprees, 7.9 percent for computers/electronics and 6.9 percent for celebrity-related wishes.
- The average cost of a wish is \$7,174 (as of Sept. 1, 2008). For every dollar donated to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, more than 76 percent goes towards wish granting, which exceeds program service allocation standards set forth by the nation's leading charity watchdog groups, including the Council of Better Business Bureaus. The Make-A-Wish Foundation was one of the first charities to earn the Better Business Bureaus Wise Giving Alliance Seal.

The Make-A-Wish mission and message are about the life-affirming, hope-giving aspects of the wish experience. We never use the words "terminal" or "dying" to refer to a wish child, nor do we unduly emphasize a child's illness, medical treatment or death.