

# Memorial Hospital of South Bend\*



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For Immediate Release

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## *Memorial Hospital Supports Kids with Cancer through 'Sunshine Kids'*

As just one of three Indiana hospitals who participate in the national Sunshine Kids organization, four teenage cancer patients treated at Memorial Children's Hospital took part in the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual National Sunshine Kids Winter Games in Steamboat Springs, CO.

Sunshine Kids from across North America had the opportunity to spend an entire week learning how to snow ski while enjoying other local activities, such as snowmobiling, tubing, sleigh rides, shopping in the historic downtown area, and more. At the end of the week, an exhibition ski race took place and medals were awarded by Johnny Spillane, three time silver medalist in the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games.

The Sunshine Kids Foundation adds quality of life to children with cancer by providing them with exciting, positive group activities, so they may once again do what kids are supposed to do . . . have fun and celebrate life!

The Sunshine Kids Foundation was founded by Rhoda Tomasco in 1982 while she was serving as a volunteer in the pediatric cancer unit of a hospital in Houston. After seeing the loneliness and depression among children during their extended hospital treatments, Rhoda had a vision to provide these young patients with opportunities to participate in positive group activities that promoted personal accomplishment and just plain old fashioned fun!

Today, that vision has been realized many times over, as thousands of children from hospitals across the country, including Memorial Hospital, have reaped the benefits of The Sunshine Kids Foundation's many programs and national and regional events.

Dr. Timothy Griffin, Director of Memorial Children's Hospital Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Program has accompanied a group from Memorial three of the last four years. "It is truly amazing to see these young people, all of whom are facing

serious health challenges, come together and bond like they do. It is very inspirational. The Sunshine Kids organization does a great job and the kids have a great experience.”

**About Memorial Children’s Hospital**

As the region's only designated children's hospital, Memorial Children’s Hospital treats children with a wide variety of medical and surgical diagnoses from more than 20 referral hospitals. This team includes pediatric hospitalists and intensivists, registered nurses, child life specialists, pediatric diabetic educators, pediatric dietitians, social workers, neonatologists, pediatric oncologists, respiratory therapists, clinical nurse specialists, pastoral care, and pediatric specialists in physical therapy, pulmonary medicine and infectious disease. To learn more about Memorial Children’s Hospital, please visit [www.memorialchildrenshospital.org](http://www.memorialchildrenshospital.org).

For more information on Memorial’s Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Program and the services available for families battling childhood cancer, please call Parent Advocate Tammy Robison at 574-647-3605.

To learn more about The Sunshine Kids, please visit [www.sunshinekids.org](http://www.sunshinekids.org).

*[To set up an interview, call Maggie Scroope at 574-647-3234. Photos are also available.]*

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