



When it Takes a Village

Generous donors help siblings learn how to welcome a new baby into the family.

Preparing for the arrival of a new baby is an exciting and busy time for a family. It includes more than just making a birthing plan, decorating the nursery, and picking out a name. It also involves learning how the new baby will fit into the family—especially for a new big brother or big sister-to-be.

To help families learn how to best welcome a new baby, Parkview Huntington provides a number of baby how-to classes and workshops, funded through donations to the Parkview Huntington Foundation. One of these is the Siblings Class offered especially for three- to eight-year-olds.

The Siblings Class helps the big brother or sister-to-be gain a better understanding of what to expect from a new baby sibling, and what their role might be when the new baby comes home.

When Parkview Huntington's instructional videos for the Siblings Class required updates for the first time in more than 30 years, Parkview Huntington Foundation donors came to the rescue, providing funds to purchase updated DVDs. "They've been quite a hit," said Sherry Baker, one of the Siblings Class instructors. "So



much so that some of the siblings have asked for one to take home."

The videos also help children understand and deal with their feelings about a new baby, letting them know sometimes it's okay to feel frustrated when the baby cries, or even to feel sad because mom is paying so much attention to the new baby. The video also suggests ways for them to be involved with the care of the new baby, so they don't feel left out.

The videos not only address emotions but also educate kids about what babies will eat, how much babies sleep, and shows them how to touch and talk to the baby.

"You touch them very soft. Like a feather," said one small big sister-to-be, demonstrating what she'd learned in the class by gently stroking her fingertip over her own forearm.

"They can't really understand what you say," said a slightly older big brother, "but they like you to talk to them. It helps them know words when they finally learn to talk."

Generosity from local donors continues to give new big brothers and big sisters the confidence and excitement to truly welcome not only just a new family member into the family, but a new friend into their lives.

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Generous Donors Provide Hope for a Full Life

Thank to donors, Patti's grandchildren will see her on the playground.

In November of 2016, Patti's doctor told her she desperately needed knee replacement surgery. In fact, he said he didn't know how she was walking at all, given the condition of her knees. But before she could have the surgery, she needed to get control of her severe lymphedema.

"I didn't even know what that term meant," Patti said. The doctor explained it was the swelling in her legs, which was so severe it was causing them to weep lymphatic fluid. "I was really scared, especially when he said it wouldn't be safe for me to have the surgery with my legs as swollen as they were."

"Without help from those generous donors I wouldn't have had that pump to use at home."

Patti was referred to Parkview Huntington Hospital for Lymphedema therapy. "Lynn, my therapist, was so patient and supportive," said Patti. "She explained every step and took the time to answer all my questions. She never made me feel rushed. At the end of every session, she always said for me to call her anytime if I had questions or concerns. I felt like she really meant it."

Therapy sessions lasted two months and included light exercise, massage, and compression wraps. Thanks to donations made to the Parkview Huntington Foundation, Lynn was able to provide Patti with compression socks and a Flexitouch lymphedema pump system for use at home.

"Without help from those generous donors I wouldn't have had that pump to use at home," Patti said. "With it, I was able to keep up with the therapy and see daily improvement. Even my daughter was amazed at how good my legs looked with all the swelling gone."

Patti expects to have knee replacement surgery by the end of summer 2017. She says she is most looking forward to being able to walk to the playground with her three young grandchildren—and she has Parkview Huntington Foundation's generous donors to thank for that.

Parkview Huntington therapist, Lynn Merrill, is pictured right demonstrating a lymphedema wrap technique often used for therapy treatment much like that which Patti received on her knees.



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Contact Your Parkview Foundation

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