

Wish Impact Study Results

Make-A-Wish America led a study that defined the effects of wishes on the organization's "community" and, for the first time, provided quantitative measures of the breadth and depth of the impact of Make-A-Wish's mission activities.

Conducted independently by a highly-qualified consulting firm, the study utilized interviews and discussions to identify and validate an extensive range of positive outcomes of wishes.

Subsequent surveys of two constituent groups – parents of wish children and Make-A-Wish volunteers – substantiated the positive effects and provided quantitative measures of their impact. While each survey addressed respondents' personal outcomes, both addressed outcomes for wish children and their families.

Overview

A wish come true empowers children with life-threatening medical conditions to fight harder against their illnesses. When they are granted a wish, they get more than just a great experience for a day, two days, or a week. That experience improves the quality of life for them and their entire family. And the community volunteers who grant wishes say the wish granting process heightens both their ability to see the best in others, and their commitment to actively help more people in need.

Health Status

- Parents and volunteers observe that a wish come true makes kids feel stronger and more energetic.
- Wish kids are more willing to comply with difficult, but vital, treatment regimens.
- They describe the wish experience as a turning point in their health battle.

By the numbers –

- 89 percent observed increases in wish kids' emotional strength, which can help them improve their health status.
- 81 percent of parents observed an increased willingness by their wish kids to comply with treatment protocols.
- 75 percent of parents observed that the wish experience increased wish kids' physical health and strength.
- 74 percent saw the wish experience as a positive turning point in the wish kids' battle against their illnesses.

State of Mind

- Children and their parents alike experience more happiness and less fear in their lives.

- Children are less isolated from friends, and feel a return of self-confidence that comes with feeling “normal” again.
- They are empowered to take back control of their lives, and to keep up the fight against their life-threatening medical conditions.
- Parents say their family units – often strained to the limit by stresses of the illnesses – are repaired and strengthened through the shared experience of the wish process.

By the numbers –

- 99 percent of parents reported that the wish experience gave their children increased feelings of happiness, and 91 percent observed that the wish experience decreased their children’s depression or sadness.
- 98 percent of parents felt the wish experience gave them the opportunity to be a “normal” family again.
- 97 percent of parents said the wish experience strengthened their families.
- 92 percent of parents saw their children experience re-empowerment to take back the ability to make decisions in their lives.
- 84 percent of parents observed a decrease in their children’s anxieties or fears.
- 88 percent of parents report they felt their own decreased sense of isolation.

Strengthened Communities

- Volunteers feel an increased sense of compassion and desire to help others in their community.
- They feel a renewed faith in humanity.
- They trust others more and feel more optimistic about the future.
- They feel a greater long-term commitment to philanthropy.

By the numbers -

- 97 percent of volunteers reported feeling more grateful and thankful as a result of helping to grant a wish.
- 94 percent of community volunteers reported an increased sense of compassion.
- 92 percent of volunteers felt an increased desire to give back and help someone else’s family.
- 91 percent of volunteers and 94 percent of wish parents expressed a deeper commitment to philanthropy and volunteering.
- 83 percent of volunteers felt an increased faith in humanity.
- 64 percent of volunteers felt increased trust in others.

