

# BIG APPLE CIRCUS

## CLOWN CARE<sup>SM</sup>

Clown Care is the original professional Hospital Clowning program. **SINCE 1986**



Clown Care is a community outreach program of the Big Apple Circus. Using an array of circus and theatre skills, our “clown doctors” create joyful encounters, tailored to the needs of each hospitalized child and their circle of caregivers.

We help ease the stress of serious illness by reintroducing laughter, play and fun as natural parts of life. Working in teams of two, clown doctors make rounds as many as seven days per week, in 14 pediatric health care facilities throughout the nation, reaching over 200,000 children annually. Clown Care has inspired a developing profession and the creation of thousands of professional programs worldwide.

Life is  
too important  
to be taken  
seriously

- Oscar Wilde

### Philosophy & Goals:

- Laughter and joy aid and support the healing process.
- We believe in empowering the hospitalized child.
- We approach our work with openness, sensitivity, spontaneity and vulnerability.
- We believe in making direct, genuine connections with every one we encounter in the hospital environment.
- We engage the healthy part of the child.

### Defining Programmatic Features:

- Our clowns represent the rich traditions of classical circus clowning and the great clowns of stage and screen, using minimal make-up and evocative costumes to create unique, approachable characters.
- Our performers are specially trained for work in the sensitive hospital environment, including updated infection control practices and HIPAA compliance. We provide ongoing training and artistic development for our performers.
- We always ask for permission from the child before entering a room.
- We cooperate with staff to engage children in play, providing distraction from pain and encouraging compliance
- We “change the energy” in the hospital environment so that even after the clowns leave the atmosphere is charged with playful interaction and laughter.
- Clown Care is a consistent presence in a hospital, one or more days per week (depending on the size of the facility), integrated into the culture and daily operations of the hospital. We visit inpatient rooms, intensive care units, emergency departments, and outpatient and specialty clinics.



**Host Hospitals:** Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta -- Scottish-Rite Children’s Hospital, Egleston Children’s Hospital, Hughes Spalding Hospital; Johns Hopkins Children’s Center; Boston Children’s Hospital; La Rabida Children’s Hospital; Miami Children’s Hospital; Yale-New Haven Children’s Hospital; Bronx Lebanon Hospital Center; Harlem Hospital Center; Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center; Barnabas Medical Center; Hasbro Children’s Hospital; Children’s National Medical Center

For more information or to donate, visit **BIGAPPLECIRCUS.ORG**