What Is a Bravery Bag?

A Bravery Bag is a bag given to families in the hospital after their child has had heart surgery or other heart procedures. When a child needs a heart surgery or procedure, the whole family has to be very brave—the child himself/herself, the parents or caregivers, and any siblings. The Bravery Bag helps the family have courage and strength through this time of crisis and to know they are not alone.

Need for Bravery Bags

About 1 in every 110 babies is born with a heart defect each year (approximately 40,000) making it the most common birth defect in the U.S. Nearly 25% of these children will need open-heart surgery or other procedures to survive. Many times, families find out suddenly about their child's heart defect and the need for surgery after birth, and the babies is whisked away by helicopter or ambulance to a hospital in another city or state. Parents and caregivers often follow the baby, sometimes with little more than the contents of their wallet or purse.

Bravery Bag Contents

Mended Little Hearts peer-to-peer support groups provide Bravery Bags to families in the hospital to help make their stay easier and to let them know they are not alone. These adorable, reusable bags contain a water bottle (BPH-free and made in the U.S.), a stuffed lion with its birth certificate, the Courageous Heart Token, a pen, a wristband and a parent resource guide. The groups add toiletry items, comfort items, and items for siblings at a local level in accordance to hospital guidelines. Families often tell us how much it means to them to get a Bravery Bag and how useful the items in the bag are to them. Receiving a bag also lets the family know that someone cares about them and that they are not alone.
We Could Use Your Help

Mended Little Hearts’ Bravery Bag goal is **10,000 bags in 2018**—that is one for each baby born with a heart defect that needs surgery or a heart procedure each year. Currently, Mended Little Hearts gives bags to over 5,500 families, but we believe that all families should receive a bag to help them through this difficult and sometimes devastating time. With your help and support, we can give bags to 100% of kids and families in the hospital after heart surgeries and procedures.
Bravery Chest

What is a Bravery Chest?

Many kids with congenital heart disease need to see a cardiologist on a regular basis to make sure their heart is functioning well and to see if they need surgery or other heart procedures. These cardiology visits can be very scary for kids. To help cardiologists and their nurses reward kids for being brave during a cardiology visit, Mended Little Hearts provides them with a Bravery Chest full of toys for kids after their cardiology visit. This program is a new program of Mended *Little* Hearts.

Need for Bravery Chests

About 1 in every 110 babies is born with a heart defect each year (approximately 40,000) making it the most common birth defect in the U.S. Nearly 25% of these children will need open-heart surgery or other procedures to survive. Children born with congenital heart defects often are not “fixed” by surgery, and congenital heart disease is a life-long condition that needs to be monitored by cardiologists trained in congenital heart defects. Kids living with congenital heart disease have to be very brave, and this bravery should be recognized, where possible. The Bravery Chest provides cardiologist and their nurses a way to honor that bravery.

We could use your help

Help us fill our Bravery Chests with new and fun toys for kids living with congenital heart disease. You can donate new toys to the Bravery Chest program and/or give to the Bravery Chest Program. Thanks for your help!