



# Impact Report

Fall 2022



the  
tiny  
miracles®  
FOUNDATION

# Expect Miracles

When an entire year goes by between gatherings with loved ones, it's always such a surprise to discover how much their children have grown and changed. You love seeing them mature and develop toward their potential, but feel wistful about the large gaps in time and distance.

Similarly, we've noticed that, by our producing just one annual newsletter, the gap in time has been too much, especially when we have so much good news to share. Starting with this Fall 2022 Impact Report, we intend to be in touch more often.

The Tiny Miracles Foundation just turned 18, and – much like the 18-year-old in your life – we did amazing things this year and still have so much more to accomplish and celebrate ahead.

We want to use this issue to convey our increased impact on more families in more ways across southwestern Connecticut over the past 12 months. There are exciting numbers to share but mainly we'll let some of the parents we've helped tell the story. As these families attest, Tiny Miracles is there to support anxious parents in our six partner hospitals and also during the transition home – emotionally, practically and financially.

We're connecting with more parents more often in more ways. We've just completed our first full year of helping families in New Haven County through our partnership with Yale New Haven Children's Hospital. Our staff and volunteers proved more than up for the task, while also integrating what had been a pandemic-forced adjustment – connecting with parents online – into now a permanent hybrid model of both in-person and virtual mentoring.

We were grateful that COVID restrictions eased this spring, allowing us to host our annual gala in-person for the first time since 2019 – and even more grateful when the event raised \$300,000.

To those who attended the gala, to those whose names are listed in the end pages of this report, and to those whose support was given so compassionately but without measure or reward, we thank you. Your gifts provided comfort and care this year to the families of Rachel and Michele, Molly, Hank and Wiley, Amara, Oliver, Isla and hundreds of other tiny miracles. Turn the pages to read their stories.



**Tina Tison**  
Executive Director



**Ashley Dineen**  
President, Board of Directors

# +40%

Increase in families  
reached by  
Tiny Miracles programs

# 557

Families mentored by  
Tiny Miracles

# 124

Families awarded  
financial aid via  
Tiny Miracles

# 3,000+

Volunteer Hours in  
support of  
Tiny Miracles

Over the past 12 months, Tiny Miracles has expanded its impact within the community of Southwestern Connecticut.

Via 6 hospitals and an array of virtual programs,  
**we are supporting more families  
than at any previous point in our 18 year history.**

# Rachel and Michele

## Born at 30 weeks at Bridgeport Hospital

### In their mom's words

I never considered that I would spend a month in the NICU. I should have known it was a possibility but the reality was I had a very unexciting pregnancy from a medical sense. I was pregnant with twins but I was healthy and so were they. I had one weird blood pressure but following monitoring was sent home "in the clear." Until that same night. My water started to break and we rushed to the hospital. Despite efforts to stop my labor, within 10 hours of my water breaking our daughters Michele and Rachel were born 10 weeks premature by emergency C-section.

They were rushed to the NICU and our real adventure began. I don't remember as much as I would like to from that day. It was raw, it was scary and everything kept happening so fast. There are a few things that stood out that day: seeing our daughters and getting to touch them that first time, finally being in a hospital room, and a bright purple cooler with items for both our daughters, information for us and a card for me. That card was my first lifeline to support that I would so desperately need.

Parenthood is scary for anyone but, when your child (or children) are so helpless they can't sustain breath or eat on their own, you don't necessarily know who else will understand what you are going through and help you stay strong. Sandra from Tiny Miracles was part of my strength. I had a card from her with her contact information right away. There was no pressure for me to do anything but she was there for me when I needed her.

We spent 36 days in the NICU. 36 days without our friends and family being able to be with us and see our girls. But 36 days with Tiny Miracles friends who stopped in and saw our girls, celebrated them and understood how exciting it was to be able to change their diaper, put clothes on that first time, have them in open-air cribs, and be able to give a bottle. Most people take these things for granted. The average parent is blessed with not knowing about oxygen, feeding tubes, central lines, desaturations, diaper weights and the many, many temperature checks, but we were blessed with Tiny Miracles and perhaps that is better.

**"Sandra from Tiny Miracles was part of my strength. She listened to me, made me feel less vulnerable."**





55

Birthday Campaigns  
supporting Tiny Miracles  
on Facebook

141

Gifts provided to families for their  
first birthday celebrations

Figures reflect service period July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

# Molly

## Born at 35 weeks at Danbury Hospital

### Her parents' story

Finding out that our daughter Molly was going to have a somewhat extended stay in the NICU was one of the scariest and toughest things we'd have to endure. Having a plan and a picture in your head about going home from the hospital as a family is something everyone thinks about before the baby comes, but sometimes it doesn't work that way.

Sharing your feelings with your spouse, family, and friends is nice, but sometimes you need to hear from someone outside your circle who can give you a bit of perspective and some truth. Both of which lead to comfort.

That's what Tiny Miracles did for our family.



Being able to chat with a mentor, send a text, or talk over zoom with someone that has done it before; or help connect you with others going through it at the same time as you is one of the great gifts that Tiny Miracles provides.

Tiny Miracles gives support in every way you can think of, but the emotional support to help deal with the anxiety and nerves is something that can't be overstated and only Tiny Miracles could provide.

**We will never forget our time in the NICU, but we will also never forget what Tiny Miracles brought to our family.**

# 386 Blankets

Made by Tiny Miracles' volunteers and  
Distributed to Families in partner NICUs



Figures reflect service period July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

# Hank and Wiley

Born at 31 weeks at Stamford Hospital



"In times of need, Tiny Miracles was there right off the bat. They were kind, supportive, and caring. Thank you Tiny Miracles."

Hank & Wiley's Dad



# Amara

## Born at 35 weeks at Norwalk Hospital

### Her mom's words

On January 21, 2022, I had to emergently have a C-section at 33 weeks gestation due to placental abruption. It was a very scary night for us. On top of that, I was struggling with symptoms of COVID. We did not know if Amara or I would make it that night.

After she was safely delivered, she was sent to the NICU and I was not able to hold or see her in person for a week. Leelee, a Tiny Miracles mentor, FaceTimed with me and I was able to see my baby for the 1st time and ensure that she was ok.

Every day someone from the Tiny Miracles team checked on us and gave us so many useful things. I am so thankful for everything The Tiny Miracles Foundation has done and continues to do for others!



"Tiny Miracles has been a godsend for our family."

# 600+

Welcome Bags distributed to families that include essential items for the early days in the NICU



## Tiny Treasures Bags



# 300+

Home Care Bags given to families to help them transition home following their NICU stay

# Oliver

Born at 35 weeks at St. Vincent's Medical Center

## In his mom's words

I can't say how grateful I am for the NICU and staff at St. Vincent's, the wonderful people of The Tiny Miracles Foundation and my totally devoted boyfriend, who was a proud father and there every step of the way! I had so much support from everyone and I knew Oliver was very well taken care of!

When we got home, it was a little harder because although I had support, it didn't feel like a lot of people around me understood what I had been going through. It was great to hear about how The Tiny Miracles Foundation had a community of moms who did a Zoom meeting/video chat weekly to touch base, check in on each other and offer advice or words of support! A lot of them told me that now you wouldn't be able to even tell their child had been born early! I've even had mentors offer extra support in other areas which is absolutely wonderful! The services The Tiny Miracles Foundation provides is beyond amazing as far as offering support or help in other ways!

"We really are grateful for all the support you have provided in the past and still continue to provide. "



# Isla

Born at 26 weeks

at Yale New Haven Children's Hospital



"I remember [the woman from Tiny Miracles] telling me her story and it automatically made me feel like everything was going to be ok. I knew we had a long road ahead of us full of unknowns but she knew all the right things to say. We truly felt cared about."

Isla's Mom

# Our Supporters

Our programs would not be possible without the generous gifts from these supporters received between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022.

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these six Connecticut hospitals.**

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Danbury Hospital



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