

To whom it may concern:

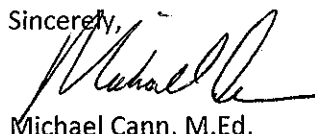
The School Intervention Program at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC) is pleased to endorse the "Monkey in My Chair" program. This program has been extremely well received by the patients, families and the schools that our program serves.

When a child is first diagnosed with a serious illness, frequent absences from school are common. "Monkey in My Chair" is an excellent way for the child to feel connected to his classroom during these periods of extended absence. Each day the child is unable to attend school, the presence of the "Monkey in My Chair" is a reminder for both the child and his peers that this student is still a member of the class. This is especially important as time progresses. Support and attention from the school community are typically very strong when a child is first diagnosed; unfortunately, as the school year goes on, it is not unusual for this support to taper. As support from the school community declines, the child is often left feeling isolated and lonely. The continuous presence of the child-size monkey in the classroom serves as a lighthearted visual to keep the patient in the minds of his classmates. The patient and class can exchange messages through the "Monkey Message" email system to maintain ongoing communication. Handwritten notes written for the patient can be delivered on a periodic basis using the "Monkey Backpack."

Teachers appreciate the "Monkey in My Chair" program because it provides the necessary materials to address a very serious topic with their students. The "Monkey in My Chair" backpack includes the child-size monkey for the classroom, a miniature monkey replica to remain with the child, a read-aloud book to help the class understand the program, and a teacher's guide complete with lesson plans. The possibilities of the program are left to the creativity of the teacher and class, and the needs of the particular school and patient. Classmates may take the monkey with them on field trips and send pictures of the adventures to the patient, they may dress the monkey each day in a different outfit, or they may transport the monkey from class to class following the child's schedule.

Cincinnati Children's Hospital is a proud supporter of the "Monkey in My Chair" program – we highly recommend this program to other hospitals not only based on our own experiences, but those of the patients and schools we support as well.

Sincerely,



Michael Cann, M.Ed.

School Intervention Coordinator