

From a Picture Maker to a Smile Maker

If a picture says a thousand words, then certainly Peter Etril Snyder would fill library upon library with his countless works of art that adorn the walls across KidsAbility’s sites.

As an artist, Peter calls himself a “picture maker,” but at KidsAbility, he is known as a “smile maker.”

A former Rotarian, even if only officially for five years, Peter has supported KidsAbility for decades. Of course, back then, Peter knew it as the K-W Rotary Children’s Centre and when asked why he started supporting an organization that over time became very near and dear to him, Peter says, “That’s lost in the sands of time. The results are obvious.”

In all that time, Peter’s favourite memory of KidsAbility remains the day he was up on the scaffolding painting the mural in the front lobby of the Waterloo site. A five-year-old boy appeared with his therapist and his mother. He had grown out of his current wheelchair, and the therapist was trying to get him excited about the prospect of a new chair: “You can choose the colour! Do you want a blue one, red one, or green one?” The child was having none of that; all he wanted was another black chair. With that, his mother looked up at Peter and said: “He’s going to be an accountant.”

“ KidsAbility changes lives.”

Peter hand-painted each of the murals in the 90’s when KidsAbility opened its doors on its newly custom-built site in Waterloo. Each of the 12 years following, Peter donated a painting, specifically for KidsAbility. When KidsAbility was the recipient of a Smilezone at its Waterloo site in 2015, the only things that were not debatable were the murals! When you visit KidsAbility, stop and admire these original pieces that are displayed with love and deep gratitude to Peter for his faithful support over the years.

In 2010, Peter and his wife, Marilyn, established The Peter and Marilyn Snyder Endowment Fund to ensure that more generations of children would have the support that they too would need. In honour of Peter’s faithful support, KidsAbility Foundation named Peter the inaugural recipient of The Outstanding Supporter Butterfly Award — an honour given annually for outstanding support of the organization.

KidsAbility is so fortunate to have Peter’s unwavering love and support. He says that he hopes the array of ways in which he has donated to KidsAbility is a positive one as he simply claims: “KidsAbility changes lives.”



Peter Etril Snyder

Donor, Past Rotarian and
2003 Outstanding Supporter Award Recipient