

Shodair Children's Hospital Launches Free Book and Mascots to Raise Awareness for Mental Health

Shodair Children's Hospital unveils a free book, mascots, and the Hope Campaign to raise awareness and support for children's mental health in Montana.

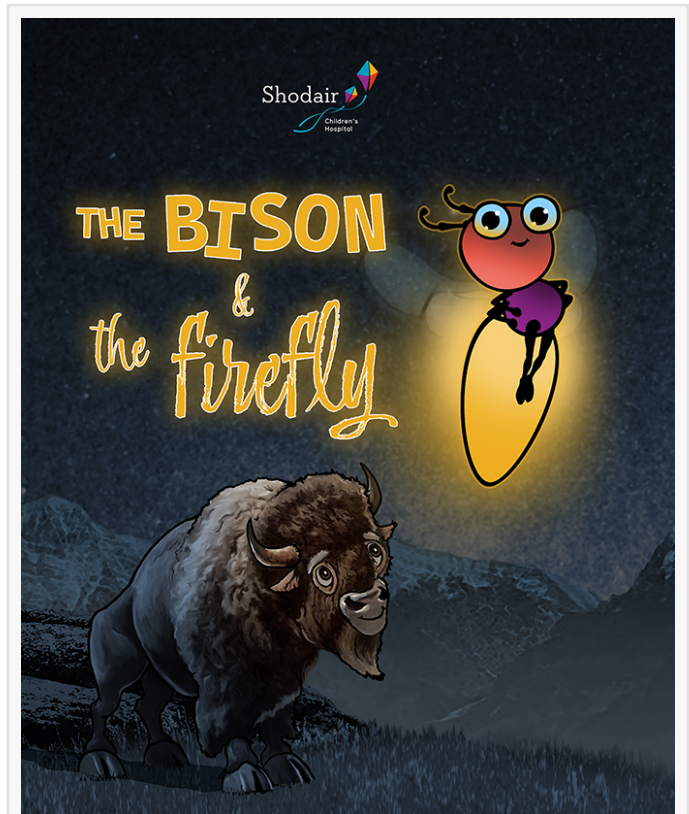
HELENA, MT, UNITED STATES, January 21, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Shodair Children's Hospital is excited to launch the [Hope Campaign](#), a new initiative aimed at raising awareness of children's [mental health](#) through a free children's book and new mascots. The Hope Campaign is a way for everyone to support Shodair's mission, as all proceeds and funds go toward ensuring that children across Montana have access to the care they need, exactly when they need it.

As Montana's only Children's Miracle Network Hospital and the sole children's psychiatric hospital within the entire network of 170 Children's Miracle Network Hospitals across the United States and Canada, Shodair stands as a vital resource for children and families in need.

At the heart of the Hope Campaign is a free children's book featuring two new mascots: Hope the Firefly and Thunder the Bison. The book aims to inspire young readers, teaching lessons of resilience, hope, and the importance of mental health support. By providing the book for free, Shodair hopes to empower children and families across Montana to face challenges with courage and optimism.

Addressing a Critical Need

Montana faces a mental health crisis that underscores the urgency of the Hope Campaign:



The cover of *The Firefly and the Bison*, a free children's book from Shodair Children's Hospital, designed to inspire hope, resilience, and mental health awareness for young readers across Montana.

- Suicide Crisis: Suicide is the leading cause of preventable death for Montana youth aged 10–14, occurring at three times the national rate.

- Severe Depression: Nearly 1 in 5 Montana teens experiences severe major depression, ranking the state 48th nationally.

- High Demand, Limited Resources: In 2024, Shodair treated 844 inpatients from 52 of Montana’s 56 counties, with 75% of patients relying on Medicaid.

- Unfunded Care Rising: Despite increasing financial strain, Shodair remains committed to providing pediatric mental health services, even as facilities nationwide close due to unsustainable reimbursement rates.



Shodair Children's Hospital logo, reflecting our mission to heal, help, and inspire hope for children and families across Montana.

“

We're excited to share the story of Hope with our great state and grateful for the incredible support from Montana and beyond. Together, we can bring light and hope to children and families.”

Joe McClafferty, Chief Development Officer

These challenges highlight the critical role Shodair plays in addressing pediatric mental health needs, making the Hope Campaign a beacon of light for Montana’s children.

The campaign’s mascots, Hope the Firefly and Thunder the Bison, symbolize the essence of Shodair’s mission. Hope the Firefly lights the path for children and families facing mental health challenges, while Thunder the Bison embodies the strength and resilience needed to charge through life’s storms. Together, they create a narrative of courage and belonging that resonates with children and adults alike.

“This Hope Campaign is not only a way to bring support to Shodair, but also a creative way to engage with us,” said CEO Craig Aasved. “The development of Shodair mascots is a way for all of Montana to engage with us regardless of age, location, or financial means. I look forward to seeing how this initiative can become part of the Shodair culture, and I hope everyone gets involved.”

Ascent Bank is proud to partner with Shodair in this effort. "These mascots will help children and

families feel more comfortable recognizing and discussing the subject of mental health,” said Tom McGree, Chief Development Officer at Ascent Bank. “We are honored to support Shodair’s mission to ensure Montana’s kids have the help and resources they need to build a healthier, more hopeful community.”

“We are excited to share the story of Hope with our great state and are grateful for the incredible support from Montana and beyond,” said Joe McClafferty, Chief Development Officer. “Together, we can bring light and hope to children and families everywhere.”

Why Your Support Matters

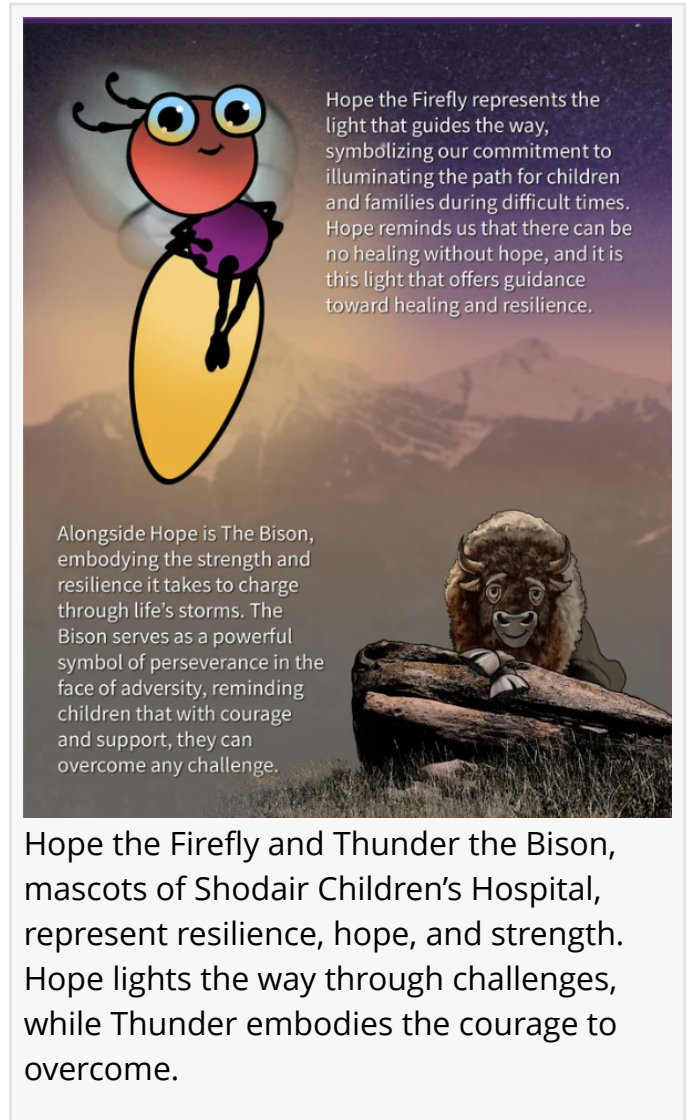
Shodair’s work addresses a growing crisis in pediatric mental health and genetics, providing vital care for children who often have no other options. By supporting the Hope Campaign, donors become part of a movement to transform lives, empower families, and create a brighter future for children across Montana and beyond. Shodair invites individuals and organizations nationwide to join the Hope Campaign and help spread its message. Donations directly support Shodair’s efforts to provide critical mental health and genetic services to children and families across Montana.

To learn more and support the Hope Campaign, visit shodair.org/hope-campaign.

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