



BIBLIOMOUSE... A LIBRARY INSIDE THE HOSPITAL

The beginnings In 2001, inside the left area of Ospedale Infantile Regina Margherita in Torino, at the bottom of a long corridor, teachers from the Play Group "Gruppo Gioco del Comune di Torino – I.T.E.R." (Istituzione Torinese per una Educazione Permanente) obtained a small space to host the Bibliomouse.

In 2003, Ronald McDonald House Charities established a relationship with Ospedale Regina Margherita and with "Associazione dei Genitori U.G.I.", a parental association active inside the hospital. In 2005, RMHC decided proposed a renovation and extension to the Bibliomouse.

What is Bibliomouse?

The Bibliomouse is an educational area where teachers, parents and volunteers can organize games and readings for hospitalized children.

It is a special library which promotes reading as a playful moment in response to children's need to listen to stories, whether read or told by an adult's voice. Planned activities and book borrowing are meant to help children through inactivity hours as well as to strengthen support relationships for hospitalized children and their families.

Reading is often accompanied by manual, creative activities giving children the opportunity to:

- interpret stories through dramatization and short theater activities;
- invent rhymes, songs, plays on words, stories;
- listen to audio and video tapes;
- create animated books;
- invent and make puppets;
- develop backdrops for stories, theater performances, etc.

Bibliomouse today

Today, thanks to the renovation completed in collaboration with Ronald McDonald House Charities, the Bibliomouse is larger and has a fresh new look. In the new area, covering about 200 sq m, it is now possible to promote and organize various activities to make the library a warm environment, where reading can be used by children to escape from their illnesses.

The new area includes:

- displays with books to borrow and read;
- reading places for children (carpet, cushions, soft sofas, bookcase baskets);
- an area dedicated to readings in a loud voice for an audience of approx. 30 people;
- an office area;
- an area for graphic, painting, creative workshops;
- a multimedia room.

Moreover, the new space arrangement provides a multifunctional room to host theater performances, music events, as well as multimedia experiences, such as the *Oper@zione in rete* project, for kids undergoing hospitalization for diagnostic exams or surgical operations.

The richness of opportunities and the renewed arrangement make this space special for children and their families.