

PRESS RELEASE
報道関係各位

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特定非営利活動法人シャイン・オン・キッズ

Handover of Facility Dog Activities at Shizuoka Children's Hospital

The retirement of Team Yogi after 9 years of service at Shizuoka Children's Hospital, and the appointment of his successor, Team Ty, will be broadcast on September 6, 2021 via YouTube Live.

Shine On Kids (President: Kimberly Forsythe, <http://sokids.org/>), a certified non-profit organization that supports children with cancer and other serious illnesses, is pleased to announce that a new team will take over the Hospital Facility Dog Program at Shizuoka Children's Hospital (<http://www.shizuoka-pho.jp/kodomo/>) starting on September 6, 2021.

Shine On! Kids' Facility Dog Program is an animal-assisted intervention program supporting hospitalized children and their families by pairing a "Hospital Facility Dog," a dog that has received specialized training to work in a hospital, with a nurse or other medical professional who has completed training to become a "Handler," a professional who handles Facility Dogs.

1. Introducing the new Hospital Facility Dog Team



Facility Dog Handler

Name :Megumi Taniguchi
Qualification :Certified Nurse with 10 years of clinical experience

Megumi had long been interested in animal-assisted therapy/interventions and went to a specialized school for animals. After graduation, she worked as caregiver at a care facility before becoming a certified nurse and starting work in a hospital. Deeply moved by the TV documentary, "Bailey and Yui-chan" that she saw by chance, Megumi aspired to become a Facility Dog Handler.

Facility Dog

Name: Ty
Breed: Golden Retriever (Male)
Date of Birth: February 23, 2019 (2 years and 6 months old as of September 1, 2021)
Birthplace: Australia (Carrier Dogs Australia)
Training: Shine On! Kids

Ty was bred at Career Dogs Australia (<https://www.careerdogs.com.au/>), which specializes in breeding a variety of service dogs. Ty was trained in Japan by a specialized dog trainer with experience working at organizations certified by Assistance Dogs International, the world's governing organization for the training and oversight of assistance dogs.

Origin of the name "Ty"

Ty was named after the founders' son Tyler, who was only two years old when he lost his battle with leukemia in Japan. Inspired by Tyler's courage and smiles, Ty's parents started a non-profit to make a difference in the lives children who fighting cancer and other serious illnesses and their family members in Japan.

Ty was trained along with another Facility Dog, "Masa", named after the late Dr. Masaaki Kumagai, who was Tyler's doctor. Masa is now working at the National Center for Child Health and Development*.

*Shine On! Kids' Hospital Facility Dog begins working at the National Center for Child Health and Development
<https://prtimes.jp/a/?f=d23199-20210630-2359.pdf>



Enjoying the interaction with the successor Facility Dog, Ty at Shizuoka Children's Hospital

2. Activities to date



Shine On! Kids and Shizuoka Children's Hospital introduced the first Hospital Facility Dog Program in Japan as a joint project in January 2010. Since taking over the program from Bailey (male, 12/14/2007 - 10/1/2020) in July 2012, Yogi (male, born 6/18/2011) has made over 27,000 visits with children, families and medical staff over the past 9 years.

Regular follow-ups of the Facility Dog teams are conducted by the dog trainers in accordance with international animal ethics guidelines. Shine On! Kids prepared for Yogi's retirement at the age of 10, in cooperation with veterinarians and the Shine On! Kids Facility Dog Program Advisory Board*. Yogi's retirement date was determined based on the evaluation of his age and physical condition.

* Japan's First Hospital Facility Dog Training
<https://prtimes.jp/a/?f=d23199-20191218-3347.pdf>

Former Facility Dog, Yogi & his handler Keiko Suzuki visiting a child



Former Facility Dog, Yogi having fun with an inpatient at “Poppo Square” at Shizuoka Children's Hospital. Summer 2021.

3. About the handover announcement

On September 1, Team Yogi and Team Ty will pay a courtesy visit to Mr. Heita Kawakatsu, Governor of Shizuoka Prefecture, who has supported us since our first Facility Dog, Bailey*.

*Facility dogs of the Prefectural Children's Hospital visited the Governor! (Japanese only)

<http://www.pref.shizuoka.jp/kousei/ko-030/buchoushitsu/buchoutalk20160425.html>

The handover ceremony on September 6th will be held with rigorous infection control measures in place and limited onsite participation of the staff members of Shizuoka Children's Hospital. The ceremony will be streamed live on our Instagram page. We hope everyone can join us online, including all the children and their families in the wards, all those who have met Yogi over the years, and all those who have supported the training of Yogi, his handler Suzuki, and his successor, Team Ty.

Date and time : Monday, September 6, 11:45-12:00

*any change in schedule will be posted on social media sites

URL : <https://www.youtube.com/c/ShineOnKids/featured>

About Shine On Kids, a certified non-profit organization

Shine On Kids was established in July 2006 and is now in its 15th year. Children facing treatment for childhood cancer and other serious illnesses face anxiety and great stress during their long hospitalization. Although the level of medical care in Japan is among the most advanced in the world, the founders felt there were still issues in terms of psychological support for patients and their families. Shine On! Kids' aims to create a complete pediatric patient support system in Japan - from the moment of diagnosis, throughout treatment and after discharge from hospital. Its core programs include: Beads of Courage in 24 hospitals, and Hospital Facility Dogs now in 4 hospitals.

Launched last year, Shine On! Connections offers interactive online content to children in 18 hospitals throughout Japan. Because all of our programs are conducted by professional health care providers, we have been able to continue the activities to support children in hospitals despite COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://sokids.org/>

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