

Local Wish Experiences – So Many Possibilities!

Wishes involving travel may not be the direction your wish child wants to go in, and there are still so many possibilities to create meaningful local wish experiences for wish children and families. *The information below is intended to spark ideas and creative thinking among wish granters and is not to be shared directly with families or considered a picklist from which kids should choose.*

Animal Wishes



Animal wishes can bring comfort and companionship to a wish child for years to come. We can work with local shelters or breeders to find the perfect pet!

Additional Requirements Needed from Family	Relevant Policies and Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical approval • Landlord approval (if applicable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service animals, animals that are illegal to own as a pet, or that would be obtained directly from a source outside of the United States shall not be permitted.
<p>Timing Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-5 months** <p><i>**Timing is breed dependent. For puppies, the dog will need to be with the mother for between 8-12 weeks (about 3 months), then delivered to the child.</i></p>	
<p>Make-A-Wish can provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The requested animal within our budget that fulfills the essence of the child's wish • \$1,000 reimbursement for standard routine vet services to include pre-adoption veterinarian check, immunizations, spay/neuter, and routine veterinarian checks for the first year • Starter supplies to include food, food dish, collar, leash, litter box, etc. • Delivery of the animal to the family's home or wish reveal at the vendor's location <p>Wish family is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtaining necessary permitting/licensure for owning the requested animal • Obtaining and paying for insurance for the animal • Ongoing maintenance and expenses related to the animal after the first year • Ensuring the home is suitable for the animal • Securing approval in writing from their landlord to own a pet (if renting) <p>Other things the family may want to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make-A-Wish Illinois would replace the animal within three months of purchase only in the event of the animal's death by disease or congenital defect only. • Once the family receives the animal they will be the sole owner and it cannot be returned to Make-A-Wish Illinois. 	

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Petland goodies & Petco shopping day (in person or online)
- Video diary of animal in the days leading up to the wish day
- Book or video guide: preparing your home for a pet
- Virtual dog training



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Adaptive & Medical Equipment



Everything from adaptative bikes, to swings, wheelchairs, communication equipment and more can provide additional mobility and accessibility to a child who needs it.

Relevant Policies and Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wishes directly related to any medical treatment, lifesaving or sustaining equipment, and invasive procedures shall not be approved or granted by chapters.
Timing Expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 - 5 months

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Extra pair of sheets or stuffed animals for their new medical bed
- Matching helmets for loved ones and wish child
- Case with the child's favorite color to protect the communication device

Sports Equipment



If your wish kid dreams of pursuing their dream in athletics, we have a variety of options that would support their goals! We can work with local vendors to purchase and deliver requested sports equipment.

Timing Expectations

- 4 - 5 months

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Jersey/uniform from the wish child's favorite team
- Video compilation of great plays, catches, goals, etc.
- Invite local high school team to help with a wish celebration/throw the first pitch of a game

Musical Instruments/DJ Equipment



Musical instruments and/or equipment can provide a wish child with a creative escape. We can work with local vendors to plan and deliver wish items that fit the essence of their creativity!

Timing Expectations

- 4 - 5 months

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Private music lessons or lessons from a local DJ
- Music stand and sheet music
- Music mixing software



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Computers / Electronics



Gaming Computer/Game Systems – We can deliver all the essentials for a wish kid's gaming system and arrange virtual assistance from a tech guru, if needed.



Computer (Laptop/iPad) – A computer can help a wish child stay connected with friends and families and assist with ongoing virtual schoolwork.



Home Entertainment – A TV streaming service, video game console and comfy furniture offers a relaxing way for a wish child to enjoy the best in entertainment and togetherness.



Headset Technology – We can help a wish child travel to their favorite places, virtually! We can help create exciting alternate environments with a virtual reality headset and games!

Timing Expectations

- 2 - 3 months

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- 1-year prepaid internet access
- Games/accessories
- Masterclass package
- Comfortable loungewear

Shopping Sprees



Shopping sprees offer the unique opportunity to shop 'til you drop and get the best deals in town. For in-person experiences, we can work with local retailers to explore opportunities for exclusive shopping before stores open.

Timing Expectations

- 2 - 3 months

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Virtual personal shopper/stylist
- Make-up tutorial with a pro
- An outfit to go shopping in
- Trendy reusable bags to carry around necessities for the big day



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Education Wishes



Whether it's online classes, payments to their school, or sessions to learn from an origami expert, we can celebrate a wish child's desire to learn and advance.

Additional Requirements Needed from Family

- Acceptance letter from the school (if applicable)

Timing Expectations

- 2 – 3 months

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- School sweatshirt/apparel
- Welcome message from the Dean
- Starter supplies – colorful pens, highlighters, folders, etc.
- Congratulations messages from HS principal, teachers, friends

Philanthropic Wishes



Celebrate a wish child's generosity and community focus through a direct monetary contribution to a charitable organization, donating an accessible swing to a local park, or thanking their medical team. These are all examples in which a philanthropic wish would take place.

Timing Expectations

- 2 – 6 months

***Timing is dependent on the chosen gift and the complexity of task involved*

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Shirt, hat, or other merch from non-profit benefitting from wish
- Letter of thanks from non-profit staff, volunteers or beneficiaries
- Business cards for kids starting a non-profit

Wishes to Be



Talk about the transformative power of a wish! We can work with local organizations and creative geniuses to help a child transform into a superhero, actress/actor or whomever else they wish to be for a day.

Timing Expectations

- 4 – 5 months

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- A cape with their superhero logo
- A lesson with an actor or tickets to a local play for inspiration



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Party



Have a birthday in the winter but want to celebrate in the summer? Want to throw a big party to see all their favorite people in one place? From themed decorations and entertainment to favorite foods and special guests, we can ensure a magical celebration that brings joy and hope to the child and their family.

Timing Expectations

- 4 – 5 months
- *Cultural Imperative Celebrations: 8 – 9 months***
***Because the planning of this wish is similar to that of a wedding, wish timeframes are unusually high due to vendor availability for hosting larger events.*

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- A make-up & hair appointment on the wish day
- A new outfit for the wish day
- Disposable camera to take pictures during the day
- A guest book

Outdoor Structures/Playhouses/Playsets



We can help a child choose or design the playset or outdoor structure of their dreams and find a local vendor to properly install it.

Additional Requirements Needed from Family	Relevant Policies and Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlord approval (if applicable) • Homeowner's/Renter's Insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is restricted to single story construction (lofts or elevated structures are permitted) and may not result in construction of a permanently habitable space • Mechanical lifts are not permitted; however, wheelchair ramps are • Electrical hook-up and plumbing are not permitted. • Wishes for sport courts are limited to half courts only
<h3>Timing Expectations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 – 6 months** <p><i>** The timing for wishes that require landscaping will not be able to begin until the spring/summer season begins in April/May with the season wrapping in October.</i></p>	
<p>Make-A-Wish can provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An outdoor structure/playset/playhouse that fits within our budget and fulfills the essence of the child's wish • Basic yard grading and preparation • Delivery and installation of the structure/playset/playhouse in the family's yard 	



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- Additional items, if applicable, medical adaptations to structure/playset/playhouse and/or basic resilient groundcover for safety purposes (i.e. mulch)

Wish family would be responsible for:

- Checking with their homeowners’ association or municipality to find out if there are size restrictions or building permits needed before the structure/playhouse/playset can be ordered.
- Obtaining and providing a copy of the permit prior to delivery, if required.
- Providing proof of premises liability insurance in their name prior to installation
- Ongoing maintenance and expenses related to the use of the structure/playset/playhouse.
- Additional family responsibilities if applicable could include, providing written approval from the landlord to allow the structure/playset/playhouse to be installed, removal of trees or other structures prior to the installation of the structure/playset/playhouse, and landscaping after the installation of the playset/playhouse.

Other considerations:

- Items are often back ordered which can result in a delay to the anticipated timeframe.
- During set-up and installation, the home/yard may be in a state of disarray and items may need to be shipped directly to your home.
- Once the family receives the playset/playhouse it will be their property and cannot be returned to Make-A-Wish Illinois.

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Groundbreaking ceremony for wish child with shovel, hard hat, etc.
- Rock garden – friends/family decorate rocks to add to a corner of the yard
- Include a large etched stone with MAW logo and wish date
- “Wish in Progress” banner that cover windows so the child will be surprised
- Shutterfly book and/or time lapse video as a keepsake

Pools/Hot Tubs



We can bring sun, fun and family togetherness to a wish child’s backyard. Inventory with pool vendors across Illinois is low this summer but we can plan for spring/summer 2025.

Additional Requirements Needed from Family	Relevant Policies and Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlord approval (if applicable) • Homeowner’s/Renter’s Insurance • Medical Approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters shall not grant wishes for in-ground pools, hot tubs, and swim spas. • The pool size may vary based on size of the family’s yard and permitting requirements as defined by their local municipality.
<p>Timing Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 – 6 months** <p>** The timing for wishes that require landscaping will not be able to begin until the spring/summer season begins in April/May with the season wrapping in October.</p>	
<p>Make-A-Wish can provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pool or hot tub that fits within our budget and fulfills the essence of the child's wish 	



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- Basic yard grading and preparation
- Delivery and installation of the pool in the family's yard
- Additional items, if applicable, medical adaptations to the pool or hot tub (i.e. lifts)

Wish family would be responsible for:

- Checking with their homeowners' association or municipality to find out if there are size restrictions or building permits needed before the pool or hot tub can be installed can be ordered.
- Obtaining and providing a copy of the permit prior to delivery, if required.
- Providing proof of premises liability insurance in their name prior to installation
- Ongoing maintenance and expenses related to the use of the pool or hot tub.
- Additional family responsibilities if applicable could include, providing written approval from the landlord to allow the pool to be installed, removal of trees or other structures prior to the installation of the pool or hot tub, and landscaping after the installation of the pool or hot tub.

Other considerations:

- Items are often back ordered which can result in a delay to the anticipated timeframe.
- During set-up and installation, the home/yard may be in a state of disarray and items may need to be shipped directly to your home.
- Once the family receives the pool or hot tub it will be their property and cannot be returned to Make-A-Wish Illinois.

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Monogrammed towels
- Swimsuit and floaties
- Water toys with lights, sounds

Room Redecorations



Some kids prefer for their home to be their oasis and we can make a wish child's room the place to be.

Additional Requirements Needed from Family	Relevant Policies and Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlord approval (if applicable) • Homeowner's/Renter's Insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters shall not grant a wish involving capital improvements that adds livable square footage to a home, changes the exterior footprint of the home, or that directly changes the tax basis of the home. • Projects involving structural changes, addition and/or relocation of electricity, ventilation and cooling/heating systems, and/or plumbing will not be allowed.
<p>Timing Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 – 5 months 	
<p>Other considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility bills may increase (depending on decorations ordered) • Redecoration projects often take longer than expected. • Home may be in a state of disarray during the project. 	



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- The list the family sends is placed in priority order and Make-A-Wish will do their best to fulfill the list of items requested but will ultimately remain within the specified budget for this wish type.
- Projects involving structural changes, addition and/or relocation of electricity, ventilation, and cooling/heating systems, and/or plumbing will not be allowed.
- Make-A-Wish will review the type of work that needs to be done and if it is deemed to be construction the child will be asked to forgo that aspect of the room redo or select an alternative wish.

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Sending items ahead of time for the child to make/decorate – DIY wall art, paint small items to be incorporated into the room, corkboard display
- Set up signs and/or construction tape to indicate work in progress to maintain an element of surprise
- Friends/family fill a mason jar with encouraging thoughts for the child to read
- Host a ribbon cutting ceremony with big scissors

Vehicle Makeover



We can help a wish teen have the vehicle of their dreams with cosmetic improvements to their vehicle.

Additional Requirements Needed from Family	Relevant Policies and Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid Driver's License • Vehicle Insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wish child, or parent when appropriate, must hold a current and valid driver's license at the time of delivery, and must submit to the chapter proof of vehicle ownership and insurance that satisfies the state minimum level for the vehicle. • Work must be cosmetic in nature only, and may not involve mechanical or safety systems.

Timing Expectations

- 8 – 9 months

Make-A-Wish can provide:

- Car customization within our budget that fulfills the essence of the child's wish.
- Renovation, restoration and/or customization to the body and/or interior of the car.

Wish family is responsible for:

- Providing documentation that the car being refurbished is registered and licensed in the wish family's name and meets/passes all state required safety and emissions tests.
- Providing the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).
- Bringing the car to an auto technician (to be determined by Make-A-Wish) to validate that the car is in reasonable condition (defined as meeting Kelley Blue Book standard for "Fair" vehicle quality or higher) to allow a refurbishment to take place.
- Non-cosmetic repairs required to bring the vehicle to "Fair" quality, if applicable
- Working with staff to make a prioritized list of specific cosmetic repairs
- On-going maintenance, additional improvements and expenses related to the use of the car customization



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Other things the family may want to consider:

- We are unable to do any work on the motor or inner workings of the vehicle. We can only do cosmetic changes.
- There may be several weeks to months where the car will be unable to be used.
- It may not be possible to do all of the repairs and refurbishments requested, but every effort will be made to complete the customization in the priority established by the child.
- Once the customization work has begun, the specific vehicle cannot be changed nor can the wish be changed to something else.
- Until the wish has been granted, the customization arrangement is between the vendors and Make-A-Wish Illinois. Any questions or concerns will be handled through Make-A-Wish staff or volunteers. We ask that families not directly contact the company handling the car customization without first talking with Make-A-Wish.
- The vendors we use to provide the wish are under no obligation to provide any goods or services to your family after the wish and should not be asked to do so.
- Once your family receives the car customization, the improvements will be the family's property and cannot be returned to Make-A-Wish Illinois.

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Car cover, big sheet or giant bow for reveal
- Invite car club or other auto enthusiasts to be part of wish celebration
- Bucket of car care goodies
- Gift cards: gas station, car wash, drive-thru restaurants

Motorized Vehicles



We can give older wish kids the freedom to explore the outdoors, in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics guidance. Inventory for motor vehicles is currently limited due to our current resources.

Additional Requirements Needed from Family	Relevant Policies and Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid Driver's License • Vehicle Insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters shall not grant wishes for gifts of the following types of motorized vehicles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles that are capable of serving as primary modes of transportation; including, but not limited to cars, vans, trucks, motorcycles, and SUVs. • Aircraft including, but not limited to, planes, powered paragliders, etc. • Boats with a top speed higher than 30 miles per hour. • Vehicles designed for living; including, but not limited to, house boats, motor homes, etc.
<h3>Timing Expectations</h3>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-5 months (when availability opens)** 	
<p><i>**We are expecting motorized vehicle availability to open in October 2025</i></p>	



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Make-A-Wish can provide:

- A motorized vehicle that fits within our budget and policies that fulfills the essence of the child's wish.
- Coverage of title and registration fees, as well as sales tax. (if applicable)
- Enrollment in a safety course.
- Safety items including, but not limited to, a helmet, US Coast Guard-approved life jackets, protective reflective clothing, etc.

Wish family is responsible for:

- Owning or obtaining a van, truck or SUV that can pull the motorized vehicle.
- Obtaining necessary permitting/licensure for the vehicle at the local Department of Motor Vehicles
- Obtaining a trailer and hitch as well as completing any modifications to your family's vehicle, if necessary, for towing the motorized vehicle (installing a tow hitch, etc.).
- Obtaining and paying for insurance for the motorized vehicle.
- Ensuring the wish child completes a safety course prior to delivery of the motorized vehicle.
- Ongoing maintenance and expenses related to the use of the motorized vehicle.
- Parking or storage arrangements and related fees for the motorized vehicle.

Other things the family may want to consider:

- If a new motorized vehicle with all of your child's desired features is cost-prohibitive, we will ask the family to consider a pre-owned vehicle with similar features or a new but slightly older model that may offer some but not all of the desired features.
- Once the family receives the motorized vehicle, it will be their property and cannot be returned to Make-A-Wish Illinois.

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Helmet and other gear
- Vehicle cover, big sheet or giant bow for reveal
- Invite local ATV group or other enthusiasts to be part of wish celebration
- Area trail maps

Camping Trailer Wishes



We can give wish children and their families the opportunity to create wonderful memories together by exploring the outdoors.

Additional Requirements Needed from Family

- Valid Driver's License
- Vehicle Insurance

Timing Expectations

- 2 – 5 months (when availability opens)**

**We are expecting camper availability to open in September 2025

Make-A-Wish can provide:

- A camper within our budget that fulfills the essence of the wish.
- Coverage of title and registration fees, as well as sales tax.



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Wish family is responsible for:

- Owning a van, truck or SUV that can pull the camper.
- Obtaining a hitch and completing any modifications to the family's vehicle, if necessary, for towing the camper (installing a tow hitch, etc.).
- Obtaining and paying for a license plate and insurance for the camper.
- Ongoing maintenance and expenses related to the use of the camper.
- Parking or storage arrangements and related fees for the camper.

Other things the family may want to consider:

- Once the receives the camper, it will be their property and cannot be returned to Make-A-Wish Illinois.

For Wish Celebration Volunteers - wish boost ideas can include:

- Necessities – bedding, cutlery, dishes, emergency kit, flashlights, etc.
- Fun pack – smores kit, ghost story book, matching family pajamas
- Wish day celebration with the vendor and local community members

Staycation Packages



We can utilize local hotel/vacation rental properties for family togetherness in the area or deliver all vacation items to the family's front door for an exciting vacation in the comfort and safety of a wish child's own home.

