



FACT SHEET

presented by 

Upopolis® is a therapeutic, safe and secure online support network for hospitalized and chronically ill youth that helps alleviate fear and anxiety, impacting treatment outcomes by enabling kids to:

CONNECT

- with friends, family & invited contacts
- instant message chat with Upopolis members

LEARN

- about procedures & diagnoses via online kid-friendly medical info

SHARE

- upload photos
- create/join discussions with other Upopolis members



Overview:

Upopolis provides hospitalized and chronically ill youth across Canada with a private, safe and secure network where they can communicate with friends and family, and connect with other youth. This therapeutic online network is comprised of paediatric patients (youth) aged 10 - 18 years, youth mentors, child life specialists and health care professionals.

One of the most popular features of Upopolis is the opportunity to express individuality, be creative and be active content contributors to the site through the creation of "spaces". These spaces may feature personal blogs, private forums to discuss diagnoses and medical experiences, hospital specific information and activities or fun and entertainment.

About Upopolis:

Upopolis began in 2007 at McMaster Children's Hospital and has since grown to include a network of 13 hospitals and health care centres across Canada – and continues to grow. Each hospital and health care center has a designated staff member (a.k.a. "Upopolis Super User") who registers users, creates content and monitors content. Upopolis' National Program Leader, an experienced clinician and Certified Child Life Specialist, helps keep users and Super Users engaged by expanding the therapeutic outreach of Upopolis, creating new programs and content, providing daily support, mentoring and developing best practices and unique programming for the use of Upopolis as a therapeutic modality.

Therapeutic Goals of Upopolis:

The therapeutic goals of Upopolis are:

- to provide a safe and therapeutic online outlet for youth with a chronic illness or hospital experience to connect with one another.
- to promote creativity for youth by allowing them to create their own spaces on Upopolis to share experiences and interests with other users.
- to access trusted medical, health and wellness information provided by individual hospitals/clinics/centres that is vetted by health care professionals.
- to express themselves through blogging, photos, live chats and online activities always with the support and supervision of mentors and health care staff who understand their unique struggles and experiences.
- to enhance the experience of a social support platform to one that is therapeutic and unique in meeting the needs of youth with chronic illness and hospital experiences.



"I think not having UPOPOLIS would make the time go by really slow, especially if you're in here for a long time...If you have this it's easier to stay in touch with people and do games and stuff like that"

Curtis, 14

"Upopolis has really helped me get through a lot! Being able to connect with other kids and teens going through treatment has really opened my eyes. Always knowing I have support from all the Upopolis users and that I support everyone is a really great thing to be able to turn to during treatment." – **Maggie, 13**

"I don't have any other social media than Upopolis so I really like using it because it is kinda like Facebook but better, LOL. Also on Facebook, you can't go to someone directly for advice because they could be someone you don't want to meet but on Upopolis you can trust." – **Maria, 13**

About Kids' Health Links Foundation

Kids' Health Links Foundation (KHLF) is a registered Canadian charity that, through the use of technology, helps young hospital patients stay connected to their family, friends and schools, and with other patients across Canada (www.upopolis.com) Upopolis was developed in partnership with TELUS. KHLF has also developed and offers online resources for front line pediatric care professions (www.upedia.ca) and child and youth mental health professionals (www.UMIND.ca), across Canada. Find out more at www.kidshealthlinks.org. UPOPOLIS®, UPEDIA®, and UMIND® are registered trade-marks of Kids' Health Links Foundation.

