Elsie Mageles is a bright-eyed and spunky 7 year old who was born with Down syndrome—but this doesn’t define her.

She’s an avid hockey fan, a painter, a daredevil on the playground and a self-proclaimed Jedi Knight. She has a passion for life that’s apparent to everyone who meets her.

For children like Elsie, physical, occupational and speech therapies are crucial during the first few years of life so they can enter preschool and elementary school ready to succeed.

When her mother, Luanne, learned of the importance of therapy to Elsie’s early development, she began with occupational therapy when Elsie was just two weeks old. She was able to utilize in-home therapies for a period of time, but the rising costs of in-home sessions soon became overwhelming. After meeting other local families facing the same situation, she began to advocate for the creation of specialized pediatric therapy to be offered locally.

In 2014, Bridgton Hospital answered her call and created the area’s first—and only—Therapy Services Pediatric Program.

Here, local children in need receive much needed therapeutic services that’s critical to their early childhood development in one location. Our Pediatric Therapy Services incorporates toys such as ball pits, swings and riding toys into therapy. Elsie gains strength, coordination and communication skills while having fun with the same therapists whom she considers friends. Their goal for Elsie is to help her reach her fullest potential in activities at school, home, and in the community—the same for each child that uses our program.

With help from the Bridgton Hospital’s Therapy Services Pediatric Program, Elsie will continue to learn and grow—and of course, save the universe... one lightsaber battle at a time.
Our NEED

Since 1917, Bridgton Hospital has been providing exceptional healthcare to our community. In 2014, the Therapy Services Pediatric Program was created to meet the needs of children who are challenged with communication and mobility problems. Our pediatric therapy staff includes physical, occupational, and speech therapists with advanced skills and certifications that specialize in working with pediatrics. At Bridgton Hospital, we want our therapists and caregivers at their best. The Clinical Staff Education Fund was created to support the education of clinical staff members who do not receive continuing education monies as part of their compensation.

With your support, we can:

- Expand the Therapy Services Pediatric Program to add more therapists and specialized equipment for pediatric patients
- Add additional services including obesity reduction, parent/caregiver workshops, a feeding clinic and specialized community services such as a Lego group for children on the autism spectrum
- Keep our valued clinicians abreast of new treatments, standards of care and medical technology through continued education

Your support will greatly impact our patients because 100% of your sponsorship dollars will go to the Bridgton Hospital Therapy Services Pediatric Program and the Clinical Staff Education Fund.

Will you help us continue to help Elsie?

The Development Office raises funds in support of the excellence in medical services and patient care at Bridgton Hospital and throughout Central Maine Healthcare. The support of your organization will help us make a difference!