

Zay's Family Found a Place to Heal

Everyone affectionately calls Isaiah, "Zay." When Zay visited Give Kids The World Village in Kissimmee, Florida, this Colorado kid had already endured numerous open and closed heart procedures as well as numerous cardiac arrests, and his fourth cardiac arrest led to an anoxic brain injury. Zay and his family both needed to heal.

[Give Kids The World Village](#) is an 89-acre, whimsical nonprofit resort, that provides week-long, cost-free wish vacations to critically ill children and their families from around the world who want to visit Central Florida. Families that visit Give Kids The World must be referred by one of more than 250 wish-granting organizations or foundations, such as [Make-A-Wish Foundation](#).



A stay at the Village is much more than a weeklong vacation; it's a chance for these families to laugh together, play together, and create unforgettable memories away from hospital stays and medical treatments.

"Our week at Give Kids The World was very healing for him and for all of us," Zay's mom says. "Watching him and the rest of the family playing in the village and bonding in our villa had me in happy tears. Walking back and forth together every day to eat our meals even felt truly special and so relaxing." She told us the family had been fortunate enough to return for a day in December 2019. "Seeing Zay's star moved us to tears. We were unprepared for that overwhelming emotion. It had rained that day, so only two rides were open; but we cherished our time there walking around and reliving our memories. We ate lunch and of course had ice cream. Zay still needs heart repairs and he can get pretty scary medically sometimes (struggling to breathe, etc.) Having a place like Give Kids The World for memories and for something to look forward to again gives us all hope!"

Last year, the Village closed to wish families like Isaiah's due to the global pandemic, delaying more than 6,000 wishes. Despite the closure, the Village created a unique opportunity last December for visitors and donors to experience – Night of a Million Lights. Night of a Million Lights was designed to raise funds to ensure that the wishes of critically ill children could return bigger and better than ever before once the time was right to reopen. Last year, USA Today named Night of a Million Lights the "Number One Thing To Do in December in Orlando."

It was such a huge success that the Village has decided to do it again this year and the [Workers' Compensation Institute](#) is playing it's part in bringing it back. WCI has organized a Gala event "Winter Wonderland" to be held December 11, 2021 in conjunction with GKTW's second annual Night of a Million Lights. For more information about the WCI-GKTW collaboration, [click here](#).

WCI & GKTW's 2021 Winter Wonderland Experience



Bring friends and family along to join us for a magical holiday experience Saturday, December 11. Last year, USA Today named GKTW's Night of a Million Lights the "Number One Thing To Do in December in Orlando!"