

Please come to hospital, Santa
Nothing dulls kids' big day
Andy Burns and Jamie First

Among the beeping machines of Melbourne's busiest hospitals, some of the state's strongest youngsters will celebrate a different kind of Christmas.

They too wish for that first bounce on the shiny new trampoline, an ice cream on the beach or the chance to celebrate around the dinner table with their families.

That will not be possible for them this Christmas.

But these courageous children and their families – who will spend December 25 on the wards of the Royal Children's Hospital and Monash Medical Centre – will not let that ruin their special day.

They will gather around their hospital bed – decked in tinsel – proving home truly is where the heart is.

Little Jakob Deans, 5, must lay flat for most of the day and suffers crushing headaches due to a hole in his head that leaks brain fluid.

He has endured 15 major operations to try to fix the condition but still keeps his sense of humour, playing peek-a-boo with a well-loved Grover toy.

Nearby, Harper Martin, 4, is fighting a tumour. Her family has been sleeping in shifts by her bedside while she undergoes chemotherapy.

But the treatment cannot dull her smile as she dons reindeer antlers and shiny nose and looks forward to Santa's visit.

Harper Martin, 4

MONASH MEDICAL CENTRE

Condition: Tumour

What would you like for Christmas?

A Barbie microphone.

Have you told Santa how to find you in hospital?

I had a chat to Santa.

What are you going to do on Christmas Day?

Watch Barbie and My Little Pony DVDs. (With her family, including brother and sister Hudson and Sidnee, by her side).

Willow Neville, 11

MONASH MEDICAL CENTRE

Condition: Pneumonia and a collapsed lung

What would you like for Christmas?

A trampoline and a basketball.

Have you told Santa how to find you in hospital?

I hope he will work it out.
What are you going to do on Christmas Day?
"We will put a little tinsel around the bed, bring everything here – but not the trampoline," her mother Priscilla says.

Jakob Deans, 5

MONASH MEDICAL CENTRE

Condition: Cerebrospinal fluid rhinorrhoea

What would you like for Christmas?

A Doggy Doo – a "pet" that you feed and he actually does doo-doo. (Jakob giggles)

Have you told Santa how to find you in hospital?

We will put chocolate out.

How are you going to spend Christmas Day?

Christmas will come to Jakob's bedside, his mother Samantha says, explaining: "I'll get his big brother in. People will come in for sure. We will bring the party here."

Kai Karamatic, 6

ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Condition: Rhabdomyolysis

What would you like for Christmas?

A really big remote-controlled car and Star Wars Lego.

Have you told Santa how to find you in the hospital?

Yeah, I wrote him a letter and told him to stop and wake me up.

If I meet him I will tell him to stay forever!

How are you going to spend Christmas Day?

Go to the Starlight room to play games like Mario and spend it with Mum.

Nathan Hovey, 3

ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Condition: Neuroblastoma

What would you like for Christmas?

A remote-controlled helicopter, because they fly. I love them!

Have you told Santa how to find you in hospital?

I wrote him a letter. I told him I've been a good boy and I want a remote-controlled helicopter, toy cars and a dinosaur.

How are you going to spend Christmas Day?

I am going to play with my toys and eat peanut butter sandwiches.

Abbeygaël Solo, 6

ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Condition: Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia

What would you like for Christmas?

A doll house because dolls are cute. And I want clothes for my teddy, Zoe.

Have you told Santa how to find you in hospital?

Yes. I made a sign with my name to hang on the door outside my room so nobody can miss me.

How are you going to spend Christmas Day?

My family is going to be with me and I want to have a barbecue. I wish I was at home, though.