

# How do you lessen anxiety in the waiting room?



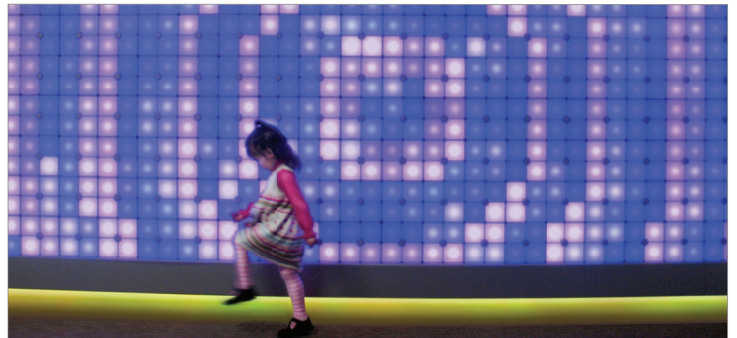
## PHILIPS IMAGINATION CANVAS AT MERCY HOSPITAL Interaction Design

During a hospital visit, children often feel anxious and lonely, and intimidated by their surroundings—a feeling compounded by their concern about their medical condition. The often dull and stressful waiting rooms of hospital wards are almost never built with any attention to the emotional wellbeing of the patient and their family. Philips was searching for a solution that would lessen patient anxiety in this environment, especially as it related to children and their family members.

We were challenged to understand the hospital waiting room experience and improve on it. Secondary research furnished us with the insights necessary to drive new opportunities and innovative solutions. Three recurring themes emerged as areas that negatively impacted patients and their families during a hospital visit: staff communications and relationships, lack of escapism, and facility navigation.



Our findings showed that long periods of waiting for children and their parents built up tension and anxiety regardless of the reason for the hospital visit. For example, mothers became stressed, worrying that if they even took a child for a short walk, they might not hear a nurse's page and miss an appointment. Overall, waiting rooms and the waiting experience only spiked anxiety, worry and apprehension.



Our solution, the “Imagination Light Canvas,” targeted distraction by providing children with an outlet for play in hospital waiting rooms and offices. This wall created an interactive environment where children can, “paint with light,” and involved unique elements of team, creative, and intellectual play. Through engaging entertainment, children’s thoughts were diverted from waiting. The lack of tension and worry enabled a holistic environment where children’s imaginative spirit relieves stress. But most importantly, it gives the patient a sense of control.

Creative direction by THRIVE partner Jonathan Dalton, while at Philips Design.  
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