

# LIVE WELL

Smart strategies for a happy, healthy life



Kristina (left) and Catherine hope to expand The Honeycomb Project beyond Chicago in the coming years.

## Family time: Making a difference together

Four years ago, Catherine Tannen and Kristina Lowenstein were lamenting the lack of family-friendly volunteer opportunities in their hometown of Chicago. Most jobs required lengthy time commitments or were geared for high school students—not ideal for their own four kids, who now range in age from 7 to 12. The duo decided to take matters into their own hands: That year, they launched the Honeycomb Project ([thehoneycombproject.com](http://thehoneycombproject.com)), which creates community service projects for families.

Since the first project in January 2011—creating activity kits for pediatric hospital patients in honor of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service—more than 1,400 families have joined the hive. “We give kids choices, such as choosing what flowers to set on the table at a shelter, to help them feel connected to the experience,” Catherine explains. Honeycomb members have completed more than 50 projects across the city, including playing bingo with seniors and removing 400 pounds of trash from Lake Michigan’s shores. “The whole family leaves with memories of hard, enjoyable work,” Kristina says. “And children gain a deeper understanding of issues like hunger and homelessness.”

—Leslie Goldman