

History of Easterseals

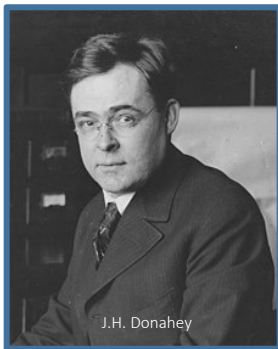


First National Society for Crippled Children stamp

In 1907, Ohio-businessman Edgar Allen lost his son in a streetcar accident. The lack of adequate medical services available to save his son prompted Mr. Allen to sell his business and begin a fund-raising campaign to build a hospital in his hometown of Elyria, Ohio. Through this new hospital, Allen was surprised to learn that children with disabilities were often hidden from public view. Inspired to make a difference, in 1919 Allen founded the National Society for Crippled Children, the first organization of its kind. The launch of fundraising efforts and the organization name changed to Easter Seals in 1934.



Edgar Allen



J.H. Donahey

The first Easter Seal was designed by Cleveland Plain Dealer cartoonist James H. Donahey. Donahey based the design on a concept of simplicity because those served by the charity asked "simply for the right to live a normal life." The lily, a symbol of spring, was officially incorporated as the National Society for Crippled Children's logo in 1952 for its association with new life and new beginnings.



First Easter Seals stamp with lily.

Today Easterseals are issued by the United States Easterseals charity and by the Canadian Easter Seals charities. These colorful adhesive seals, typically the size of a regular denomination United States postage stamp, are mailed to more than 19 million households across the country every year around Easter. The mailings result in raising over \$13 million to support services to people and families with disabilities. Patrons apply the stamps to mailed envelopes to demonstrate support for the organization and Easterseals' causes.

Easterseals addresses the needs of individuals and families throughout the lifespan – from inclusive child care to respite care –to help people "reach for their full potential." This American 501(c)3 nonprofit provides disability services with additional support areas serving veterans and military families, seniors, and caregivers. Services and programs are tailored based on the needs of the individual and the local community.

In the U.S., Easterseals has a network of 75 locations across the country. Services assist people with physical disabilities, mental disabilities, and special needs. Parents can find support for a child who has a diagnosis at birth, and there are services for people who have a disability due to disease, injury, or aging. Professionals at Easterseals help people overcome barriers, achieve independence, and reach their goals. Easterseals serves not only communities in the United States and Canada but also in Australia, Mexico and Puerto Rico.

Like all Cinderellas, Easter Seals are collectible. You will find them for sale on various stamp auction sites. The Stamp Forum, an online philatelic sharing site, has a section dedicated to U.S. Easter Seals, which can be found here: <https://thestampforum.boards.net/thread/1048/easter-seals>

To the right is part of a sheet of Modern U.S. Easter Seals

