

Like



Jamie's Smiles

A fund dedicated to helping children
with special needs

www.JamiesSmiles.org

Will you help Jamie's Smiles make a difference in children's lives this holiday season?

Dear Friends:

Well we are in year number two of "unusual". We hope that you and yours are well and happy! So many things have changed over the past two years, but one thing remains the same and has even gotten more intense... your community needs your help much more than in many former "average" years. Imagine having not one child, but **three** during Covid and having two of them be special needs. That is what our family is facing this year.

This is the Bates family's 25th year of adopting families with our family and friends and our 17th year adopting families through the Macomb Infant Preschool Program (MIPP). We have decided to "completely adopt" one family this year. This year we have chosen to adopt the following deserving family with triplets and two of them are children with special needs:

David, Dominic & Derek's Family

David, Dominic and Derek are 17 month old little boys who live with their Mom/Breanna (age 25), Grandma/Kimberly (Age 47) who is legally blind from an accident.

At the age of five, Mom survived cancer of her sinus cavity and the lining of her brain. She has lasting health issues from the cancer and treatments such as being blind in her right eye, hearing loss in her right ear, neurological issues, and dental issues. She was told that she might not be able to have children.

In July 2018, she got married and in September of 2019, she found out she was pregnant. In Mom's words, "It was a miracle". Shortly thereafter, Mom found out she was having triplets. She went for an ultrasound and the tech saw that David had fluid around his heart. They were sent to the University of Michigan and found out that the heart defect was called hypoplastic left heart syndrome (HLHS). [CLICK HERE](#) to go to the Mayo Clinic's site and information about HLHS; or view the brief summary below:

"Hypoplastic left heart syndrome is a complex and rare heart defect present at birth (congenital). In this condition, the left side of the heart is critically underdeveloped. If your baby is born with hypoplastic left heart syndrome, the left side of the heart can't effectively pump blood to the body. Instead, the right side of the heart must pump blood to the lungs and to the rest of the body."

HLHS put not only David at risk, but the entire pregnancy and all three babies. They also found out that David had two other heart defects. Mom and Dad were told that David would likely not make it long after birth and that the longer he stayed in the womb the better his chances of survival after birth.

In the meantime, Dominic was measuring so small that he was considered "intrauterine growth restriction" (or poor growth of a baby while in the mother's womb), so the sooner he was delivered the better off he would be.

All this during the height of Covid! Because of the high risk pregnancy and babies with health concerns, they scheduled a C-section as soon as it was safe for them to do so. All three babies arrived safely. After the babies were born, Mom's uterus would not contract. She lost a lot of blood, had two blood transfusions, and an emergency hysterotomy. Dominic and Derek were rushed to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at Harper/Hutzel and David was rushed to the NICU at Children's Hospital.

Dominic spent eleven days on a breathing tube and feeding tube before being discharged. The doctors determined several days after birth that Dominic also has a heart defect called "bicuspid aortic valve". According to Cleveland Clinic, bicuspid aortic valve (BAVD) is when an aortic valve that has two flaps/cusps instead of three. It may cause a narrowed or obstructed aortic valve opening making it difficult for the heart to pump blood into the body's main artery the aorta. [CLICK HERE](#) to visit Cleveland Clinic's site for more information about BAVD.

Mom was not able to see David for 24 hours after he was born. When she was finally allowed in, he was hooked up to a ton of machines and was intubated so she was not even allowed to touch him. He had his first open heart surgery at four days old and spent his first 100 days all in the hospital. He suffered a stroke during that time. He was eventually able to wean off intubation and learn to breathe on his own. He had a nasogastric tube (NG tube) commonly known as a feeding tube. His second heart surgery was a heart transplant this past June. He has been able to live at home since

July, but is being closely watched by his Cardiologist and other doctors.

Mom has 22q11.2 Duplication Syndrome. [CLICK HERE](#) to go to the "National Organization for Rare Disorders" site for an overview of this syndrome or view a brief synopsis based on that site as a source below:

"22q11.2 duplication syndrome is a condition caused by an extra copy of a small piece of chromosome 22 which contains about 30 to 40 genes. The features of this condition vary widely, even among members of the same family (intrafamilial variability). Affected individuals may have intellectual or learning disability, developmental delay, slow growth leading to short stature, and weak muscle tone (hypotonia)."

When **David and Dominic** were born their family found out that they had 22q11.2 Duplication Syndrome as well.

Derek is David and Dominic's fellow triplet and is also a 17 month old little boy. He does not have any known special needs at this time.

The family currently lives in Grandma's small home. According to Mom, Dad recently left the family and has offered very little help or support. Mom and Grandma are working hard to find assistance to provide for their needs, but they are struggling and going under since they are house-bound due to health issues of the triplets.

Last Minute Update

David was admitted to the hospital this week for frequent vomiting and poor weight gain. They are monitoring him closely and there is no talk of discharge in the very near future. We are awaiting a status update on his health...

This family needs: 3 specific conversion kits to convert their cribs to toddler beds, winter coats, pajamas, winter clothing, shoes, socks, boots, hats, gloves, diapers & wipes, bedding/sheets, and a television. They have asked for a TV because they are house-bound and the one that they are using only has picture on half of the screen. This is their "eye into the world" and sole entertainment so if you have a gently used TV to donate, please let us know!

We have also had several other families reach out through MIPP with larger items needs like high chairs, learning toys, beddings, etc. We will provide these items to additional families as we are able based on our funding this year.

As is our custom, we will only come to you TWO TIMES this year via email. Please note that this is our first email and we will send ONLY ONE follow up unless we need to follow up on a pledge from you.

If you are interested in helping, we hope that you will consider writing out your

check or sending a PayPal (see below) immediately so you don't forget. We plan to do the majority of the shopping for our families on November 2nd as we have student volunteers helping that day since they are off school. We will send one additional email with an update on our donation status and then you will not hear from us unless you made a donation or financial pledge that requires follow up or when we send a "thank you"!

Whether you can donate \$5 or \$1,000 or more, we will put it to the best use we can and the value that our combined funds and efforts can have to others who are struggling is tremendous. We pool all of the funds and meet as many of the needs of local families as possible.

Kohl's on 26 Mile Road in Shelby Township, generously gives us significant discounts on the merchandise that we purchase in their store. As a result, everything bought at Kohl's costs pennies on the dollar. Often Kohl's has also made a \$500 contribution and they have helped to wrap the gifts for our families. We have requested their help again this year!

We have also applied for matching funds through Wood and have applied for support through "Thrivent Action Teams".

Additionally, we have other vendors that give us discounts or support and contribute yearly because they care. If we have more money than we need for this deserving family, we will provide food and clothing gift cards to additional families, as there are many others in need in these uncertain times and still more coming forward to ask for assistance. **Last year we were able to help more than 62 additional families with food gift cards alone.**

Merger Update

In case you did not catch it in our update from last year's adoption, the Shelby Community Foundation has merged with the Four County Community Foundation which is a 501c3 so many of your contributions may still be tax deductible (please speak with a tax professional for details). As a result of the merger, your check and some of our correspondence will look a little different this year.

As a result of this change, please make checks payable to the "Four County Community Foundation - Jamie's Smiles", or if you prefer you can also contribute items, but these will not be tax deductible. If you are willing to help, please email us with your commitment as soon as you can.

Contributions can be made through PayPal! Contributions via PayPal can be made by [CLICKING HERE](#), input an amount, and select "Donate with PayPal". **Please know that we NO LONGER pay processing fees on PayPal contributions so this is a super fast and convenient way to make a contribution.**

To send a check, please make it out to "Four County Community Foundation - Jamie's Smiles (Christmas)" to us at: PO Box 539, Almont MI 48003. We need to know what our budget will be to make purchases, so please help us out by sending your check, PayPal, or email commitment by Monday, November 1st!

For more information about Jamie's Smiles, please call Gretchen at 586-206-5556 or visit us on [Facebook](#) or on our regularly updated [Website](#) and please bear in mind that we also accept new left over Christmas wrapping paper to wrap the gifts donated and purchased.

We thought you might be interested in checking out just a couple of pictures of families from previous adoptions below...

Thank you for time, consideration and generosity,

**The Bates Family & Jamie's Smiles
(Mark, Gretchen, Logan & Sidney)**

PS By way of background for those of you who are new to the invitation (please bear with us if you have seen this information before), for many years we have championed adopting families of special needs children through MIPP. This is the organization that gave Jameson such phenomenal care and therapy while he was with us and sick with Infantile Spasms. We choose needy families with children with special needs who need a "hand up." Often, people do not realize the financial, physical and emotional burden of raising special children. They are incredible! They are worth it! But fiscally speaking, they can set you back so that you can never recover. In the 19 months that we had Jamie, his care cost approximately \$40,000 out of pocket and we had EXCELLENT insurance. You can imagine what it does to people with lesser insurance, etc. Anyhow, we try to help mitigate some of these costs for as many families as we can every year... Please join us in making a difference in these people's lives...

CLICK HERE TO MAKE A DONATION VIA PAYPAL

**2020 Adopted
Mom & Child
Opening Gifts**



**2020 Adopted
Children Wearing
Gifts**



**2020 Adopted
Child Playing
with a Gift Made
Possible by**

**Donations Like
Yours through
Jamie's Smiles**



**2019 Adopted
Family Opening
Gifts**





**2018 Adopted
Family in Coats
and Winter Wear
provided by
Jamie's Smiles**

**2017 Adopted
Child Opening
Gifts**



Please Note: Jamie's Smiles is a fund held and administered by Four County Community Foundation.

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