

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 again this holiday season?

Dear Friends:

Wow! The weather sure has been unpredictable this fall! We hope that with the turn in the forecast and as we approach the holiday season, you and yours are well and happy! We are coming to you to share about members of our community that need your help.

This is the Bates family's 27th year of adopting families with our family and friends and our 19th 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 Mom, Dad, two boys (with significant special needs) and a little girl:

DJ's Family

We are adopting Donte Junior, AKA "DJ", (6 months), his brother Carsen (Age 4), his sister Caisyn (Age 2), Mom, and Dad.

Mom got pregnant with Carsen at age 28. During birth, Carsen got stuck in the birth canal and had a delayed delivery. He was sent to Children's Hospital with low oxygen and failure to properly latch even to a bottle for feedings. He stayed there about a week and showed improvement.

At about 3 months, Carsen was diagnosed with hypotonia. According to [Healthline](#), “Hypotonia, or poor muscle tone, is usually detected at birth or during infancy. It’s sometimes called floppy muscle syndrome. If your infant has hypotonia, they may appear limp at birth and not be able to keep their knees and elbows bent. Many different diseases and disorders cause the symptoms of hypotonia. It’s easily recognizable because it affects muscle strength, motor nerves, and the brain. However, diagnosing the disease or disorder that’s causing the problem can be challenging. And, your child may continue to have difficulty with feeding and motor skills as they grow.”

Carsen started therapy as soon as possible, but at about 5 months of age he started choking easily. At 8 months he choked on his own secretions, and he was rushed to the hospital where he had to be resuscitated and intubated. He remained in the hospital for 3 months.

Caisyn had an uneventful birth and she is average development for her age. Several months after Caisyn was born Mom and Dad were surprised to find themselves pregnant again, this time with Donte Junior, “DJ”.

About 3 months after DJ’s birth he was diagnosed with hypotonia and he began therapy. DJ’s ability to feed started declining and he had to be placed on a feeding tube. Late this summer, he had labored breathing, and when Mom checked his oxygen level, it was extremely low. She took him to the hospital and he was found to also be having sleep apnea episodes. They intubated him for two weeks, but he did poorly when he came off the intubation. As a result, he received a tracheotomy.

Dad is a welder and works hard to support his family. Mom stays home full-time now to take care of the largely bed and homebound boys and their sister. Carsen attends Glen Peters as he is able with his health as he is completely ventilated and oxygen dependent. DJ is not ventilator dependent, except at night, but sometimes requires ventilation assistance during the day.

Mom says, “I am happy to be their parent and to be on this journey with them every day.” She speaks lovingly and knowledgeably about her children and their health concerns.

Additional Needs

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

Can You Help?

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 family's needs on November 7th as we have student volunteers helping that day since they are off school. We have already purchased and delivered coats for the family since the weather was colder earlier this month and it is likely to move significantly colder soon. 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. We have requested their help again this year!

We have also applied for matching funds through Wood and we have 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, and large items like car seats to additional families, as there are many others in need and still more coming forward to ask for assistance. **Last year we were able to help more than 82 additional families with food gift cards alone.**

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 do NOT 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 Friday, November 3rd!

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](#)

**2022 Adopted
Child Enjoying**

Opening Gifts



Sebastian with His New Toy

**2022 Adopted
Child Enjoying
Opening Gifts**



Emma Opening Her Stocking

**2021 Adopted
Child, Gerold
(One of the
Triplets) Using
One of His
Gifts**



**Gerold Enjoying His
Holiday Blessings!**

**2021 Adopted
Children,
Dominic &
Derek (the
Other Two
Triplets)
Opening Gifts**



**Dominic & Derek Enjoying
Opening Presents**

**2020 Adopted
Mom & Child
Opening Gifts**



**2020 Adopted
Child Playing
with a Gift
Made Possible
by Donations
Like Yours
through
Jamie's Smiles**



**2019 Adopted
Family
Opening Gifts**



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

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