



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:

Guess what time of year it is? It is the official kick-off for the 2017 Jamie's Smiles Christmas adoptions! This is the Bates family's 21st year of adopting families with our family and friends and our 13th year adopting families through the Macomb Infant Preschool Program (MIPP). We have decided to "completely adopt" two families again this year. As usual, our two families this year really need our help! Their children need more care and special items than most children and they have serious financial struggles so we have taken on fewer people with greater needs. This year we have chosen to adopt the following deserving families with children with special needs:

Jamar's Family

Jamar is a 10 month old little boy who lives with his Mom, Rachell (age 29), and Dad, Daiman (age 26). Jamar was born about a month early on December 27, 2016 and weighed 5 pounds and 8 ounces. He had trouble breathing on his own, so he was rushed to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit where he remained for 13 days. During this time, it was found that he was born with Vacterl (a nonrandom association of birth defects that are linked genetically). He went home on oxygen for a few months during which he had two surgeries on his club foot, two malrotation surgeries, two hernia repairs, and a few procedures, the most recent of which was on his heart. Jamar has dextrocardia (according to Wikipedia this is a medical condition in which the heart inclines to the right side of the center of the chest instead of the left, often with a similar reversal of all abdominal organs) which has caused his organs to be mirror flipped to the other side of his body. Jamar has one kidney, a hole in his heart, a right club foot, and severe scoliosis which has caused pressure on his lung and prevented proper growth making one lung smaller than

the other. He also has some rib anomalies and most of his ribs are fused together which also is causing additional trouble with his breathing. He will have to have more surgeries in order to correct his spine and ribs in the near future.

Mom can only work part time due to so many doctors' appointments, unforeseen surgeries, Jamar's frequent ill health and procedures. Dad works, but makes just enough to get by with rent, food and bills. Mom says that Jamar is the *"...happiest kid in the world nothing seems to hold him down. I was told he wouldn't sit on his own he wouldn't be able to crawl and that he would have development problems. However each and every day he shows the world that he can and will. Jamar has a smile that lets me know that no matter what, everything is going to be ok. I ask myself everyday what's my next move how can I work and take care of my sick child..."*

This very sick little boy and his family desperately need our help!

Oliver's Family

Oliver's family is made up of six people. Mom, Becky (age 29), stays home to care for her children and Dad, Michael (age 28), works for a financial institution. They have four children: Oliver (14 months old), Isaac (age 3), Lucas (age 5), and Jessykah (age 7). Becky and Michael have been married for over 8 years. After having their first two children, they decided to utilize an Intrauterine Device (IUD), implanted by a doctor, to prevent pregnancy. However, the IUD failed and they had Isaac. Two years later, a second IUD failed and they gave birth to Oliver.

Three of the family's four children have been diagnosed with special needs:

- By 6 months old, Lucas was still not able to completely hold his head up and he was diagnosed Hypotonia, commonly known as floppy baby syndrome which is a state of low muscle tone and often involving reduced muscle strength. He has been diagnosed with ADHD, Disruptive Behavioral Disorder, anxiety, and an articulation issue. He is currently in speech therapy and a full time kindergartener.
- Isaac is delayed in several areas. He was diagnosed with failure to thrive as an infant and was recently diagnosed with Mixed Expressive Receptive Language Disorder and Global Developmental Delays. He is currently in PT, OT and Speech.
- Oliver was diagnosed with failure to thrive and is currently in the "Early On" program.

In 2015, the family lost their house due to a sewage pipe collapsing. They are currently renting a manufactured home. Their rent keeps going up and they struggle to pay the rent, bills, food and medical costs. Mom has begun to exhibit mental illnesses such as depression and major anxiety and does not sleep well because she worries about her children and financial situation.

Mom says, *“With all of the illnesses, delays, diagnosis’s, therapies, appointments, bills, vehicle issues, mental illnesses, etc., my husband and I manage to stay as positive as possible knowing that things will get better sometime in the future; near or far!”*

This family is struggling to make their bills and put food on the table. They really need our help!

This year both of our families need: Winter coats, pajamas, winter clothing, shoes, socks, boots, hats, gloves, diapers & wipes, bedding/sheets, comforters, books and toys.

As has become 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. **We hope that you will consider writing out your check immediately so you don’t forget. We plan to do the majority of the shopping for our families on November 7th as we have High School student volunteers helping that day.** 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, we will put it to the best use we can and the value that our combined funds and efforts can have to others less fortunate than ourselves is tremendous. We pool all of the funds and meet as many of the needs of these 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. For many years, Kohl's has also made a \$500 contribution and they have helped to wrap the gifts for our families. They have agreed to help again this year!

Additionally, we have other vendors that give us discounts or contributions and contribute yearly because they care. If we have more money than we need for these two deserving families, we will provide food and clothing gift cards to additional families, as there are many others in need and still more coming forward to ask for assistance.

Because we ask that checks be made payable to the Shelby Community Foundation your contribution is tax deductible (please speak with a tax professional for details). 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](#), choose to "Log In", select "My PayPal", then "Send & Request", and finally "Send to Friends and Family in the US". From here, follow the directions to complete your contribution. Of course you can still send your check made out to SCF – Jamie's Smiles (Christmas) to us at: PO Box 183181, Shelby Township MI 48318 as well. We need to know what our budget will be to make purchases, so please help us out by sending your check or email commitment by Monday, November 6th!

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

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 a couple of families per year..... Please join us in making a difference in these people's lives...



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