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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Jamie's Smiles Adds Third Grant/Gives Out \$3,000 in Grants to Help Children with Special Needs**

In 2004, an amazingly gentle spirited and loving little boy named Jameson Bates, aka "Jamie", was born with Down syndrome. Devastated that he passed away from a rare seizure disorder in 2006, his parents, Mark and Gretchen Bates, created the "Jamie's Smiles" memorial and endowment funds to help other special needs children like their son and to raise awareness about the value of "special kids" in our community.

Jamie's Smiles is a fund held and administered by Four County Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3), in memory of Jameson Bates. Their mission is to supply supplemental funding to outstanding programs that benefit special needs children, through grants and other financial means. Gretchen Bates said, "We are super excited to announce that even amidst the unusual circumstances of the past couple of years, Jamie's Smiles has been able to add a THIRD grant this year and to release \$3,000 in grants to help programs assisting children with special needs in our local community."

On October 21, 2021 the Macomb Infant Preschool Program (MIPP), serving approximately 1,000 students with special needs ages birth to 3 years in Macomb County, received three \$1,000 grants for a total of \$3,000 from Jamie's Smiles for current projects and equipment. The money from these grants is for the purchase of aids to enhance seating options for babies and toddlers, support garments, splints, and developmental toys that will promote skill acquisition and milestone development including fine and gross motor skills, cognitive development, and social emotional development. Some items will be used on site at their locations and other will be utilized as short-term loan equipment for families to use for child development and in-home teaching.

When asked about their projects Bates said, "Helping others is my passion...especially those in the special needs community! That is why we love working with the Macomb Infant Preschool Program (MIPP). MIPP has been working double time even in this atypical environment. They are working hard to keep everyone safe, while adapting their teaching and therapy methods to continue to improve the lives of children with special needs like our son. We want to support their important efforts during this difficult era. We are thankful to have such high-quality programs in our own back yard to continue to help so many children progress and prosper."

Bates went on to say, "We are also excited to announce our Holiday Adoption program for families of children with special needs through MIPP. We are adopting families from the MIPP program who are raising children that have special needs. We rely on the support and generosity of people in the community who have a desire to change the lives of others for the better by offering them a hand-up. We invite everyone with a giving heart to join in our mission to change lives and help others, especially those with special needs."

Contributions via PayPal can be made by going to <https://jamiessmiles.org/make-a-donation> then click "Donate Now", input the amount you would like to donate, and finally select "Donate with PayPal". From here, follow the directions to complete your contribution. Of course, you can still send a check made out to "Four County Community Foundation - Jamie's Smiles (Christmas)" to them at: PO Box 539, Almont MI 48003 as well. For more information about Jamie's Smiles, please call 810/798-0909 or visit them on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/JamiesSmiles/> or on their website at [www.JamiesSmiles.org](http://www.JamiesSmiles.org).

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