


# HEARTS and SMILES



Issue I, June 2006

**NEWS**

Welcome to the first edition of the quarterly newsletter for The Hearts and Smiles Foundation. Thank you for taking the time to learn who we are and what we are trying to accomplish.

## **OUR MISSION**

To provide assistance to low-income families with special-needs children in Montgomery, Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Philadelphia counties, with a particular focus on the needs of siblings in those families.

## **OUR HISTORY**

After Rachel Teresa Scarcelli was born in January 2004, her undetected heart defects became immediately evident. Open heart surgeries repaired the damaged heart, but left Rachel too weak to eat on her own. Gastroesophageal reflux complicated the feeding situation, so Rachel never learned to eat. At 2½ years old, she is still dependent on a gastrostomy tube for feedings. While Rachel was being treated at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia throughout her first year, her parents sought assistance from friends and family who lived close by to help with the care and emotional support of her two older brothers. Without that strong network of help, Rachel's brothers would have had a much more difficult time dealing with not only an ill sister, but also with significant disruption to their daily routines. The realization that many families do not have a support network inspired Rachel's mother to take action.

Begun as a gesture of human kindness to one family in need, The Hearts and Smiles Foundation has grown into an organization providing assistance for many low-income families in Montgomery County who have a special-needs child. With the help of the social workers at Easter Seals of Southeastern PA, the Foundation implemented a Wish List Program to identify families in need. In the Foundation's short existence, numerous families have submitted wish lists for consideration. These families struggle with disabilities such as autism, developmental delays, genetic disorders and physical deformities. Social workers anticipate this need to continue.

The Foundation's hope is to offer each family some financial relief in the form of grocery store gift cards. In addition, it will provide items such as children's clothing, baby equipment, personal grooming items, paper products, toys and books for members of the family based on their "wishes." Especially important to the mission is supplying unique gifts such as bicycles, scooters or toys for all siblings, who often get overlooked in times of stress.

**P.O. Box 1253, Southampton, PA 18966      215-669-4221      Fax 215-997-7987**

**Email address: [heartsandsmiles@comcast.net](mailto:heartsandsmiles@comcast.net)**

## OUR FORMATION

The Hearts and Smiles Foundation was incorporated as a nonprofit organization in the state of Pennsylvania on June 12, 2006. An application has been filed with the federal government to receive the designation of 501(c)(3), which would make any contributions to the Foundation tax-deductible.

### ~ Sharing Smiles ~

Thanks to The Hearts and Smiles Foundation,

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

##### Chairman

*Melissa Scarcelli*

*Founder*

##### Vice Chairman

*Robert Sutton*

*Principal, IMA Consulting*

##### Treasurer

*James H. Monaghan*

*Col. USAR, Retired*

##### Secretary

*Virginia M. Duffy, Esquire*

- ☺ A 6-year-old girl in Lansdale is happily cruising the sidewalks this summer on her brand new hot pink training wheel bike.
- ☺ A mother of five in Ambler is outfitting her little ones with donated clothing and diapers.
- ☺ A 6- and 9-year old brother-sister duo is winding through Ambler on their brand new scooters.
- ☺ An immigrant mother can keep her son comfortable by feeding him special formula to control reflux, a necessity she couldn't afford last month.
- ☺ An amputee grandmother put a special holiday meal on the table this Easter for her three grandchildren.
- ☺ A single mother, whose son is autistic, stocked up on groceries from Weis market to feed her two children.

## OUR NEEDS

You can help by donating any of the following items:

- ✓ Used Children's Clothing
- ✓ Used Toys, Books, Games
- ✓ Used Baby Equipment
- ✓ New Personal Grooming Items (shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, Chapstick, lotion)
- ✓ New Paper Products (paper towels, toilet paper, napkins)
- ✓ New Arts & Crafts Supplies (pencils, markers, crayons, paper, stickers)
- ✓ Diapers, Wipes
- ✓ Grocery Store Gift Cards (Acme, Giant, Weis, Redners)
- ✓ Monetary Donations (cash or a check made payable to "The Hearts and Smiles Foundation")

You can also help by spreading the word. With more people helping and giving, more families can receive this gift of kindness.

**OUR TESTIMONIALS**

The following is a letter sent by one of the social workers who refers families for the Wish List Program. She had just accompanied a Foundation representative to a donation drop-off for a single mother raising a daughter and an autistic son.

*Dear Melissa,*

*I just wanted to thank you again for your incredible generosity towards (child)'s family. (His mother) was obviously very touched that someone cared enough to help make her life and her day brighter. Your gifts were so thoughtful and just perfect for all of the family members. I will never forget the glee she expressed that she was now able to buy precious grapes for her daughter at Weis's!*

*(The other social worker) and I are very grateful that you are starting up your Hearts and Smiles Foundation. We look forward to a long and fruitful relationship with you! Thank you again. I hope you have a wonderful summer.*

**HELP US TO SAVE**

If you have received this newsletter in print form, and would like to help us reduce our administrative costs, please send an email to [heartsandsmiles@comcast.net](mailto:heartsandsmiles@comcast.net). Just type "Newsletter" in the subject line and we'll place you on our electronic mailing list.

**~ Thank you for your support ~**

*"Living with a child who has special needs is very difficult . . . emotionally, physically and financially. Everyone in the family is affected. The extra attention a special-needs child requires is often given at the expense of others in the family. If I can help alleviate some of the financial burden the family feels, if I can put smiles on their faces even for one day, maybe they can feel strengthened to face the next challenge."*

*- Melissa Scarcelli, Founder and Chairman*

✂ -----

I want to help families in need. Enclosed is my gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to be used where it is needed most.

Please make checks payable to The Hearts and Smiles Foundation and mail to P.O. Box 1253, Southampton, PA 18966.

Donor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_