

HopeNotes

imagine HOPE here.

"Whenever anyone asks me what HopeKids does for families I show them this picture and say, 'This is what they do.' There is nothing more amazing than seeing that look on your child's face."

Cassandra Lambert treasures each look of wonder she spots on her son, Johnathan. Last year, he spent 115 days in the hospital because of his mitochondrial deletion syndrome.

"Your mitochondria converts everything you eat and drink into energy," Cassandra explained. "It's like your battery. The DNA of his mitochondria is broken. All the processes [in his body] are deleting themselves."

At age 6, Johnathan recalls a time when he was able to run and play and when he could eat food. In spite of the deterioration, Johnathan remains upbeat.

"He's so big in his personality and the love he gives," Cassandra said. "There's a lot of pride in watching him as he deals with these things. He handles himself with such love and joy."

As a single mom of three, and like many parents who have a child with a life-threatening medical condition, having a job is out of the question. Along with financial stress, Cassandra felt a cloud of guilt because she has so little time with Johnathan's siblings, JJ and Lilly. Extended hospital stays mean someone else tucks the older kids in at night.

"After Johnathan was discharged from the hospital, we were finally reunited, but there was nothing to look forward to," Cassandra said. "I would save all our money in a year for a weekend camping trip. That's all we could manage."



Cassandra recalls the despair she had felt when JJ requested a birthday at Legoland. It was out the question financially. Amazingly, a Legoland event appeared on the HopeKids calendar the week of his birthday.

"It really felt like his birthday celebration," Cassandra said. "The events always seem to work out with what the kids really wanted to do."

Since joining HopeKids, the family has attended numerous events, giving them access to a wider variety of family activities than they could have dreamed. The harsh realities of Johnathan's syndrome are always there but Cassandra likens it to a long, dark tunnel.

"When I think of the hope, the hope is the bright spots along the way. I don't even know how to explain what it means for us to have things to look forward to when we used to never have anything to look forward to. It's strengthened our bond as a family, and made such a difference in everybody's outlook on life."



The Lambert Family
(L to R): JJ, Lilly,
Cassandra, and Jonathan

WHAT IS YOUR CHRISTMAS WISH?

"My wish is that my kids will get to be adults, and that they will all outlive me."

"That my daughters get to grow old with each other and that we become debt free!"

"My wish is that all my son's complications won't slow him down and he will live a long, happy, successful life."

"My wish is that my girls will be healthy and happy and serve others with a pure and hopeful heart!"

"My Christmas miracle would be that Tanner would wake up and be able to run and jump just like any other 7 year old boy, and be potty trained! No more wheelchairs, leg braces, or diapers that leak!"

"A day without seizures."

"My wish is the my son can talk, and tell me how was his day."

"My wish it that my son sees himself as a masterpiece that God has blessed us with."

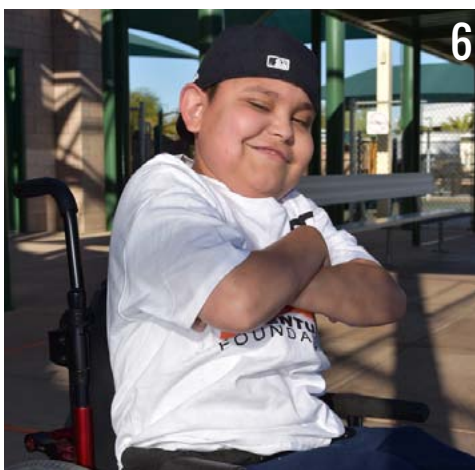
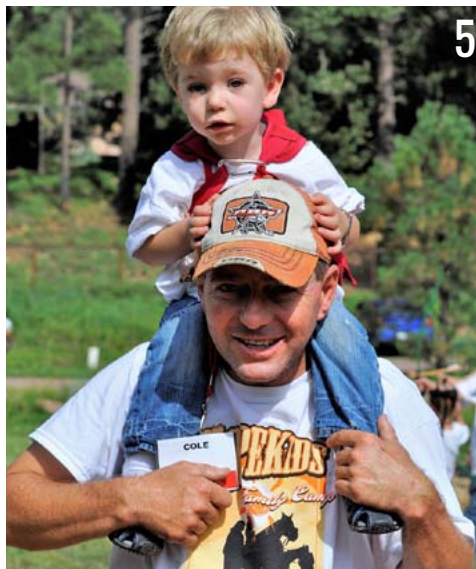
"For our son to live. To beat his terminal cancer diagnosis and be fully healed."

"That there be a huge outpouring of healing on our HopeKids and their families. Physically, emotionally, financially - God meets every need!"

"That every HopeKids family gets to be in their own home for Christmas and that their families will be healthy and happy for the new year."

"That everyone in our family can be healthy and happy, and be able to give some joy to others this Christmas."





HOPEKIDS ARIZONA PHOTO ALBUM

Snapshots captured at September, October, and November HopeDay Events

1. HopeKid Angel enjoys MacDonald's Ranch Pumpkin Patch.
2. HopeKid Devin, and her family strike a pose at Family Portrait Day.
3. HopeKid Christian learns how to "let it roll" at the Let it Roll Bowl event.
4. HopeKid Diesel works on his creation at My Box Art Event.
5. HopeKid Cole and his dad explore Whispering Hope Ranch.
6. HopeKid Michael shows off his skills at the K2 at Bat event.
7. HopeKid Robert enjoys the ponies at Whispering Hope Ranch.
8. HopeKid Joel receives his finishers medal during the 9th annual HopeWalk on October 7 at Notre Dame Prep school. More than 600 Attendees representing 95 teams rased \$68,000 to help provide hope to families who have a child with a life-threatening medical condition.





American Woodmark Foundation
 Arizona Cardinals
 Arizona Coyotes
 Arizona Diamondbacks
 Arizona Rattlers
 Arizona Roller Derby
 Arizona State University
 Ballet Arizona
 Be Kind People Project
 Bergen Family
 Bob Weslowski Photography
 Caitlin Werly
 Celestial Nights Family Entertainment
 Children’s Museum of Phoenix
 Christ Greenfield Church
 Cindy Joiner Photography
 Colten Cowell Foundation
 ComiCare
 CorePower Yoga
 Clydesdale Manhattan
 Dan Emrey

Dance Connection 2
 David Ryan
 Desert Stages Theatre
 Don Church
 DDW Partners
 East Valley Children’s Theatre
 Embassy Suites-Tempe
 Executive Council Charities
 Fry’s Food Store
 General Mills
 Gerber Injury Law
 Ghostbusters
 Glass Slipper Events
 Grand Canyon Railway and Hotel
 Grand Canyon University
 Huss Brewery
 Inventure Foods
 Jennifer Nicole Photography
 Joe Faherty Photography
 Julie Lilly
 K2 Adventures Foundation
 Kevin Young
 Lamar Advertising
 Lennon Equine Therapy
 Let it Roll Bowl
 Live Theatre Workshop
 Mark and Bev Nuessle

Mesa Community College
 Microsoft Store-Chandler
 Miracle League
 Miss Arizona Title Holders
 Musical Theatre of Anthem
 My Box Art Foundation
 Notre Dame Preparatory High School
 Pastor Joe Eriquez
 Phoenix Suns
 Renaissance Hotel
 Roadhouse Cinemas
 Rhonda & Nenos-Build Events
 Scott Bates Photography
 Sea Life Aquarium
 Smiles To Go Photo Booth
 Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center
 State 48 Theatre Company
 Spotlight Youth Theatre
 The Academy
 The Encore Agency
 Tiffanie Aylesworth Photography
 Tucson Speedway
 UltraStar Multi-tainment Center
 Valerie Thompson-Garcia
 Valley Youth Theatre
 Wells Fargo Home Mortgage
 Whispering Hope Ranch



MEET MATEUS

Mateus is a 7 year old boy whose happiness is contagious, and his smiles light up any room. At age 5, he was diagnosed with a genetic mutation called PIGN mutation that causes encephalopathy, quadriplegia, immune deficiency, and cerebral palsy among other conditions. Mateus loves music, going to school, and play time with his brother. He also loves being outside and going for walks to see the birds.

“Mateus’ health condition discourages us from exposing him to “real life” without knowing there will be a structure that makes it safe and accessible for him. HopeKids is this structure! They go above and beyond to make our events inclusive, functional, and fun to every single member of our families. HopeKids helps us make family memories we would never have imagined possible. We are and will be forever grateful for all these memories we treasure and thank you from the bottom of our hearts!” - Viviane, Mateus’ mom

