

## *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?

"For this family to have a great Christmas."

"For my daughter to be healed and not have to go through chemo anymore."

"I can think of no greater miracle than neurological health for my daughter."

"Finding a cure for the diseases that plague the world would be a miracle. Healthy children, healthy families and caregivers that care. I pray for peace and understanding nightly. I wish all our needs of vehicles, money, and health could be miraculously given to all of us, but it is not going to happen so I continue to pray that God will give me

what we need when we need it and that when I want to throw in the towel he carries me through the tremendous pain and hurt to a clearing of peace."

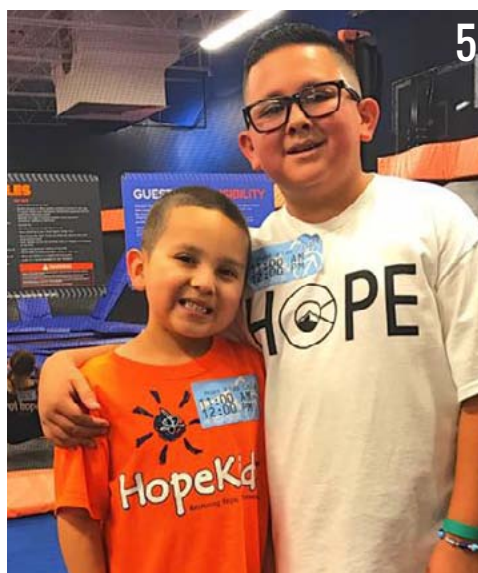
"For a cure for our five special needs kiddos. For our daughter to have a full heart instead of half. But God controls that, so for us, greatest dream would be to pay off our daughter's special needs van so we could not have the stress of always trying to make ends meet or that the van will be taken from us and our six kids. We need it so desperately to transport her and her machines and all of us to and from the hospital all of the time."

"For our daughter to make it through the winter without any hospitalizations!"



# HOPEKIDS COLORADO PHOTO ALBUM

Snapshots captured at September, October, and November HopeDay Events



1. The 2017 HopeWalk, sponsored by MGA Home Healthcare, raised over \$31,000 to help keep kids like 3-year-old Noah focused on the future.
2. It was hard to tell if Carter or his dad had more fun at our Microsoft family gaming night.
3. After months of fighting cancer, HopeKid Samuel and his family welcomed the opportunity to watch the Denver Nuggets play from a private suite donated by Kroenke Sports & Entertainment.
4. HopeKids events provide a safe, exciting environment for kids like R.J. and Rhiannon.
5. HopeKid Emilio and his brother Diego were "jumping for joy" at our private event at Sky Zone Arvada.
6. Alyssa may be the youngest of six siblings, but that didn't stop her from hitting the slopes at SNOBAHN.
7. HopeKids families spent their Saturday morning preparing meals for kids in need with Feed My Starving Children.

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8. It may be getting cold outside, but the kids couldn't get enough of the warm water at SafeSplash Swim School.
9. Zayne was not even off the golf course before she asked her mom when she could come back. Perhaps you are looking at a future LPGA player!
10. Mara shared her vocal talent with us by performing Katy Perry's song Fireworks during the 2017 Rocky Mountain Scarfest.
11. Both Carter and the kids from the Watoto African Choir have a story - both are miraculous.

**SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR HOPE DAY PARTNERS**

- ACT Colorado
- Alamo Drafthouse Cinema
- Audubon Nature Center - Chatfield
- Budweiser Events Center
- Cart Driver
- CH9 Racing
- Colorado Golf Association
- Colorado Symphony
- CYT Front Range
- DS Environmental Consulting
- Faith Lutheran Church
- Game Day Memories
- GameWorks
- Kroenke Sports & Entertainment
- Mariah Ehler Photography
- Mici Handcrafted Italian
- Microsoft Sore - Park Meadows
- Mile High United Way
- Movie Tavern - Aurora
- Mutual of Omaha Bank
- Paint the Town
- SafeSplash Swim School
- Scarman Inc.
- Seats of Dreams
- Sky Zone - Arvada & Parker
- SNOBAHN
- Vala Vincent Photography
- University of Colorado Athletics
- University of Denver Athletics



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## MEET ISABELLA

Isabella is a happy, 9-year-old who always has a smile on her face. She was diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy which affects all the muscles in her body. Isabella enjoys going to all the movies and Alamo Drafthouse, but her all time favorite event has been Disney on Ice.

“HopeKids has brought joy to Isabella and our entire family.”