

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): J.J., Lilly,
Cassandra, and Jonathan*

WHAT IS YOUR CHRISTMAS WISH?

"Not to have a trace of something that could be breast cancer so I can continue to be the caregiver for my boys and not need care alongside them."

"For Griffin to eat food by mouth and for him to enjoy eating. I pray his little body will grow and strengthen with each bite."

"Our Wish is like many others. We need financial help. Our Christmas is going to be thin due to bills and expenses. All of our bills are late. Our oldest has had to moved back in because he's lost his job and apartment. His truck is wrecked and has bald tires."

"For my husband to not have to work two jobs to support our family so he can be able to spend more time at home with his kids."

"My heart warrior doesn't have to have another liver biopsy in January."

"A seizure free day."

"My wish is for Erin to have a successful heart cath and stent refreshment in December and have a good report regarding overall health. My other wish is that I could afford to retire and spend more time with her."

"I would like for our family to be all together for Christmas without any hospitalization. Everyone healthy, happy, and HOME!"

"My wish is for a tumor shrinking treatment for neurofibromatosis type 2 so our son does not have to go through more brain surgery."

"My wish is for my son to find a new kidney."



HOPEKIDS NORTH TEXAS PHOTO ALBUM

Snapshots captured at September, October, and November HopeDay Events



1. Calan and Lawson enjoy the HopeFlick at Alamo Drafthouse Cinema.
2. Dallas Stars player, Antoine Roussel, handed HopeKid Caleb a puck pre-game.
3. HopeCrew members help sell 50/50 raffle tickets to raise money for HopeKids at "Hockey Fights Cancer" night at the Dallas Stars game.
4. Hildebrand family enjoys an old fashioned photo booth at our first movie under the stars.
5. HopeKid Alijah and his siblings received free bikes from the Keller Police Department at a Spokes 4 Hope event.
6. HopeKid Daylen meets Darth Vader at our family picnic.
7. HopeKid Tyus takes over controls in a flight simulator at our event with CAE.

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8. Sanaa dances with Keller police officer at the Fairytale Ball.
9. Texans Credit Union hosted a private trick or treat event for 100 HopeKids family members.

"Your organization provides an extremely vital service to those families, and we are happy to play a role in your success and to contribute to giving HOPE!" - Kim Rodriguez, Committee Chair for Gensler Clay Shoot to benefit HopeKids

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR HOPE DAY PARTNERS

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| ShangriLlama | Texas Ballet Theater |
| Lone Star Brahmas | Dallas Mavericks Foundation |
| The Little Gym | Bricks & Minifigs |
| Merlin's Magic Wand | Artisan Center Theater |
| Museum of Biblical Art | Racers for Christ |
| CycleBar Southlake | Nasher Sculpture Center |
| Cloth & Glaze | State Fair of Texas |
| Microsoft - Frisco | Arlington Parks and Recreation |
| Texas Rangers | CAE |
| Microsoft - Dallas | Noah's Fort Worth |
| AT&T Performing Arts Center | Texans Credit Union |
| Hayward Baker | Spokes 4 Hope |
| Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau | Pieces of Me |
| Paws for Reflection Ranch | RDO Equipment Company |
| Dallas Stars Foundation | Allied Integrated Marketing Board & Brush Colleyville |
| Building Smiles Foundation | Dance Institute of Dallas |
| Alamo Drafthouse Cinemas | United Special Sportsman Alliance |
| Spaghetti Warehouse | Gensler |
| North Texas Escape Rooms | Helping on Horseback |
| Noah's Las Colinas | Texas Legends |
| Milestone Church | Taste Buds Kitchen |
| Minis and Friends North Texas | American Airlines Center |
| Dallas Children's Theater | |



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“Being a part of this is an answer to my prayers, because my family needs to interact and engage with other families who “understand” what we go through. We have wonderful family and friends who love and support us unconditionally, but sometimes they just don't get it - and HopeKids does!” - Kristi, Don's mom



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MEET ZAE'QUAN

Zae'Quan is an easy-going 12-year-old who loves football, basketball, and video games. He was diagnosed with sickle cell disease and has been attending HopeKids events since 2015.

“HopeKids is definitely a blessing to our family! We've had the opportunity to attend fun events but also met families who are faced with similar challenges.”

- LaTanda, Zae'Quan's mom