

DESERT BLOOMS

February 2013

February brought us some very special occasions. We had two birthday girls. Yes-sica turned sweet seventeen. She and her mother come to the center for our Saturday sessions because her mother works during the week. Yes-sica has a form of dwarfism known as Seckel's Syndrome. Most people assume that she is about three years old but she is every bit a teenager. She especially loves the color purple and anything to do with the Disney Princesses. Yessica always has her purse nearby and is quick to show off her favorite lip gloss! She also loves stickers, as shown in the photo on her forehead, and anything with glitter.

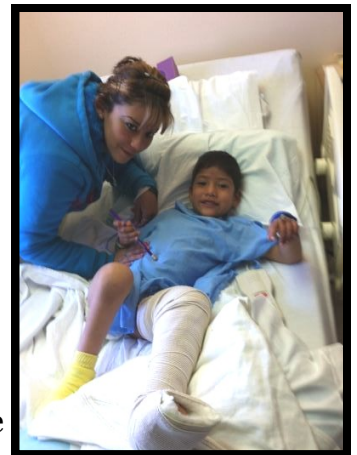


Brisa, our miracle girl, celebrated her second birthday early in the month. She will receive her final chemotherapy on February 28th and we hope you will join us in giving thanks to God for the amazing recovery she has made since her diagnosis a year ago with neuroblastoma. Were it not for the hair loss associated with chemo, no one would imagine the journey she has taken in the past twelve months. She is a testament to the resilience of children as she has re-learned everything she lost with the onset of a rare childhood cancer. Brisa is walking, climbing the stairs, playing and eating appropriately for her age. She is extremely shy but she gets that straight from her mother and grandmother, Nidia and Isidra, who we know so well.



In mid-summer we became reacquainted with Freddie and his mother, Lucero. He had come to see us two years ago after surgery on a clubfoot deformity. Lucero's work schedule didn't allow them to come for regular follow up and we were shocked when we saw Freddy hobbling around in August. The brace on his lower leg was broken and his left foot was turned almost completely backwards. We were able to get him to see Dr.

Jacob Heydemann, an orthopedic surgeon from El Paso who has a monthly clinic for poor children at a hospital located in downtown Juarez at the international bridge. Dr. Heydemann has made arrangements for a few of our special children to receive surgery at Providence Hospital in El Paso. Such was the blessing Freddy received on February 5th.



"They put me to sleep and then they put a cast on my leg!" Freddy exclaimed when we visited him on the evening of his surgery. He was clutching a bag of Doritos and Hershey's kisses close to his chest. "Are you sure? Show us!" With great ceremony he uncovered his left leg, casted from toes to thigh. "Wow! Look at that!" We talked about how the doctor and his helpers had done their work but that our work would begin when the cast came off. "Lots of exercise," we said. Freddy nodded and added emphatically, "So I can run and play soccer! And even ride a bicycle!" That's right. Everyone has a part to play... so that Freddy can run and play like other children.