



We Need Your Help



Isabella will be 4 years old in a month and it's amazing to see how many advances she has made in the last year. As many of you know, Isabella was diagnosed with epilepsy when she was six months old. Since that time we have been struggling to keep her seizures under control through a variety of different medications. A year ago after many tests and over 8 hospitalizations our doctors decided that the next course of treatment would be brain surgery. In April of 2009 Isabella was hospitalized for brain surgery, which resulted in a total of 5 surgeries. During this hospital stay Isabella contracted MRSA, a severe staff infection in her brain, and had to be on continuous intravenous medication for 6 weeks. Almost a year later she has recovered incredibly and is a bubbling 3 year old girl who loves to tell jokes, dance, read and write. She loves playing with her little brother Philip and making new friends.

In February of this year Isabella had a seizure at which point we decided to contact 4 Paws for Ability in hopes of being accepted for a seizure assistance dog. We were very excited to find out that this organization accepts children of all ages and tailors the training of the service dog to the individual's needs. In Isabella's case we requested that the seizure assistance dog be trained to provide distraction during unpleasant medical procedures and assist with comforting her when she is admitted to the hospital or during doctor's visits. Isabella has often had seizures while asleep. Her body becomes stiff, her head goes off to one side, and she stares off into the distance. She is unresponsive through the seizure and can't walk without assistance afterwards due to the emergency medications that are used to stop her seizures. Isabella has never been able to sleep alone. As a result we haven't been able to get a full night's sleep since her diagnosis. We fear that she could have a seizure and we would not notice. A seizure assistance dog could not only help her sleep alone and safely in her bed, but also help foster her independence and ease social interactions with her peers. Isabella will be attending pre-school soon and interacting with other children who will not understand her condition and may become frightened if she has a seizure at school. The seizure assistance dog will help break down those barriers with her peers. Although her teachers will receive education regarding seizures, the seizure assistance dog will be an incredible resource, assisting teachers and school personnel to recognize a seizure that may not be obvious to them.

As she gets older, and with the help of a seizure assistance dog, she will be able to have more independence. The idea behind this is that she will be able to play with her friends or on a school playground without having an adult or aide standing next to her the whole time. The adult, of course, would still be nearby in case of an emergency. This independence will allow her to interact with other children her own age and hopefully break away from the stigma that children and adolescents can experience when they have epilepsy thereby allowing her to have healthy relationships with her peers. The seizure assistance dog will also be able to assist Isabella with behavior changes that are associated with seizure medications through a technique known as behavior disruption. Isabella's particular dog will also be trained in assisting her with her balance through periods of unsteadiness when her medication doses increase or immediately after a seizure. This seizure assistance dog will also be trained as a public assistance dog and will be able to go with her to school. We are very excited about the newest addition to our family but we need your help.

We have been accepted to receive a seizure assistance dog from 4 Paws for Ability, Inc. Based in Xenia, Ohio. 4 Paws for Ability, is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Most agencies don't provide service dogs to children, however, 4 Paws is known across the US and throughout the world for their work with children. With your help we can receive our service dogs within 9-12 months after our fundraising is complete. 4 Paws has a unique program to make sure they never have to make children wait on a waiting list for services. They allow their families to form a partnership with them to do fundraising to support their mission. A dog like the one Isabella will receive costs 4 Paws \$22,000 to train and place. We are committed to raising \$13,000 for 4 Paws for Ability in support of their mission to help them continue to place dogs like the one Isabella will receive without a waiting list. Please help us help 4 Paws continue their mission! Your tax-deductible donation can be made directly to 4 Paws for Ability. Please indicate on the memo line of your check or in the special instructions box on PayPal, that the donation is in honor of Isabella Ruiz-Green so we can get volunteer credit for bringing your donation to 4 Paws! Donations can be sent to: 4 Paws for Ability, 253 Dayton Ave., Xenia, Ohio 45385. For more information on 4 Paws for Ability, please visit 4 Paws for Ability online at www.4pawsforability.org. If you have any questions please feel free to email Sara Green-Otero at 4pawsforisabella@gmail.com.

Thank you ahead of time for considering a donation for Isabella Ruiz-Green.