

Davyn



Davyn Teoh Yung Jien
11 April 2001 – 12 Feb 2002

Little Davey seemed to be the one in a million who would defy the odds, as family, friends and strangers came together to help his family struggle to overcome the many complications he was born with. Although the final miracle never came to be, his family feel blessed by the love he brought to them in his short but intense life.

Written by Davey's parents, Ser Yee and Tjong San

We were first congratulated about Davey's birth only after he had been born 4 days. Indeed there seemed little to be congratulated about at first. Davey was born with multiple heart defects. He did not have an anal opening. There was blockage in his digestive tract. His spinal cord was attached to his bone. He had Down Syndrome. And by the time he was 10 days old, he had had 2 emergency surgeries.

But looking back, we appreciated the congratulations because Davey brought so much joy and love to our family in his short 10-month stay with us. He strengthened our family ties, showed us the hearts of true friends, reunited us with old friends and introduced us to new and lasting ones.

Davey's story is a story of miracles, although the miracle didn't come in the way we had hoped. Scores of people witnessed the miracle of doors opening to lead Davey to Chicago for his complicated heart-repair under an expert and experienced surgeon, without our having to sell our home to afford it.

Angels in the form of doctors donated their time and services to make it happen. The paediatric surgeon in Chicago generously offered to do the surgery for free; a wonderful young doctor from KK Children's Hospital volunteered to take personal leave and accompany us on the journey to Chicago (the airline required the doctor as we needed an oxygen tank on board the flight).

Two amazing mothers from America, total strangers to us, took on our cause and made possible our journey to Chicago. Two friends in Singapore passed around a hat to offset as much as our costs as possible and we were overwhelmed by the tremendous generosity of family, friends and strangers.

People donated frequent flier air miles for 3 tickets to and from Chicago—for Ser Yee, Dr. Lim and the oxygen tank (which required a seat). Hope Children's Hospital waived many of their charges and Rotary Club Chicago saw to the rest of the medical fees. A family in Chicago generously opened their home to Davey and us for his 6-week pre- and post-operation stay.

So what went wrong? We'll never understand why the miracles didn't continue right to the end of the total heart repair. How is it that we came so far and got so near, and didn't reach dry land?

The day after a seemingly successful open-heart operation, Davey's heart stopped and he was revived after some time. But because blood flow was severely affected during those critical minutes of resuscitation, oxygen to his brain had been cut off. His organs started failing and the pacemaker, the ventilator and a cocktail of drugs kept his body functioning. In essence though, Davey was irrevocably brain dead, and we had to accept the truth after very conclusive tests.

Turning off one's child's life support leaves very deep scars. But the wonder is that one does heal. We all, each of us, are surrounded by a community which reaches out when there is pain. Counting our very many blessings has helped us bear with the loss of Davey, and his brother and sisters continue to love him dearly for Davey was perfect to us all in his little imperfect body.

Ser Yee and Tiong San

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