

November 22, 2011

Dear Students and Parents,

I have been speaking with Mrs. Sickinger regarding a Christmas project for all of us to join in. As most of you are aware, my youngest daughter, Emilia, has Down syndrome. She is the greatest blessing our family has ever received and we can't imagine life without her.

In the three years since her birth, we as a family, have become advocates, not only for Em, but for the children that no one speaks for.....the unwanted children...the orphans with Down syndrome living in Eastern European countries. For the most part, these children are thought to be trash and a useless embarrassment to their families. They are usually given up to adoption at birth. The issue with adoption in these countries is that unlike the United States where there is a waiting list to adopt a Down syndrome child, there is almost no hope for adoption. If these children are not adopted by the age of four, the process begins to transfer them to an adult mental institution. Once they are admitted to such a facility, their heads are shaved, placed in restraints and often tied to their cribs. The children receive very little food and most of all, no love. These institutions are kept in deplorable condition and 85% of these beautiful children will die within the first year of placement. I have friends who have adopted children from orphanages and institutions. I have seen their personal photos and have heard their stories. My friends will never be the same again, nor will I after sharing their experiences. These children are treated worse than wild animals and lose their will to live. These children are just like our daughter, Emilia!

Reece's Rainbow is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping these Down syndrome children find permanent family placements. They are an adoption ministry that raises funds to help to defray the astronomical costs of International adoption. Each year during the Christmas season they run their biggest fundraiser of the year. It is called ***The Angel Tree***. Each child that is available for adoption has their own account. The money raised is held in their account until they have a family to take them home. The funds are released when the family is ready to travel to Eastern Europe to bring the child home. In just five years Reece's Rainbow has been responsible for saving over 500 orphan Down syndrome children from certain death. This year alone seven children on ***The Angel Tree*** have found "forever" families.

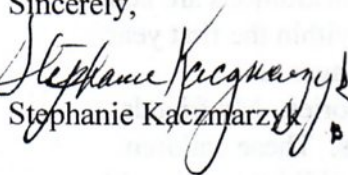
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This year I have chosen to raise funds for Carina. I thought this might be a beautiful Christmas project for families to participate in. Change jars will be placed in each classroom. All you have to do is collect spare change and send it in with your children. The classroom that collects the most money will win a pizza party! We will begin collecting change on December 1st and collect the jars on December 22nd. The winner will be announced before Christmas break and the pizza party will follow in January.

I am asking for change, but if you feel you are being called to donate more than change, you can send a donation directly to Carina's account on Reece's Rainbow. The address is: <http://static.reecesrainbow.org/angeltreekids/>. Please scroll down to Carina's picture. If you send in a donation of \$35.00 or more, you will receive a Christmas ornament with Carina's photo. This will be sent directly to you (while supplies last) from Reece's Rainbow. You may also track her account on Reece's Rainbow. Feel free to fund raise for Carina on your own. Maybe a change jar at work or with your extended family. We really have the ability to save her. Most children are found and adopted through word of mouth. Carina looks so sad in her photo. Wouldn't it be wonderful to see her smile and know that you are a reason for her smile!

Thank you in advance for your generosity and have a blessed Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,


Stephanie Kaczmarzyk

Carina 15H



1ge4r-15
Girl; born, April 2008
Nature: Calm

Her picture is so forlorn ... I hope we can find her a family to make her smile!

Carina is said to have a moderate intellectual delay, as well as a physical / motor function delay. She has an open oval window of 2 mm (which may yet close on its own), and she has a heart murmur. She has enlarged tonsils, and dermatitis — so, pretty much your standard little girl with Down syndrome!

