

## Story of Joshua Charles Nelson & family- “Heart Ordeal”

It's a story that even baffles us especially when trying to recall and explain it to other people. For nearly 28 months, Joshua's heart issue went undiagnosed. As a baby he *always* had cold feet, which required multiple pairs of socks and seemed to become a bit more “winded” when compared to his older brother's energy level. Still, we didn't have any concerns or feel there were any underlining issues with him--certainly not with his heart! As a stay-at-home Mother, it's my primary job to make sure both of my boys are kept up-to-date on all of their immunizations and wellness check-ups.

It was the end of February 2010 when I took Joshua into his usual pediatric office, *Wayzata Children's Clinic* for a common cold he wasn't getting over. Joshua was seen by Dr. Joseph McHugh and at that time, not only did he discover an ear infection but a “newly discovered heart murmur.” Since this was *never* before heard or documented by any of the other pediatricians, my first thought was that *not* having my other son along possibly helped the doctor hear Joshua's heart better *without* all the additional noise. Although considered a “subtle” heart murmur, Dr. McHugh advised to wait for the cold symptoms to improve and medicine prescribed for the ear infection to be taken to ensure that had no effect on what was being heard then have it checked again in a few weeks.

After having a re-check later that month, Joshua's ear infection had cleared up but his heart murmur was still present. Dr. McHugh advised to then have this checked out by a Specialist - *Children's Heart Clinic*, so an appointment was made for March 3, 2010 to gain more information and “assign a name” to his heart murmur. At the appointment with Dr. Kristen Dummer, a few tests were performed on Joshua --an echocardiogram, ultrasound of his chest, and several blood pressure checks of his arms and legs. Even while the ultrasound tech graphed the narrowing of his Aorta, I *still* wasn't aware there were any problems and *oblivious* to what I was about to hear. Upon completion of these tests, Dr. Dummer explained that Joshua had a condition known as “Coarctation of the Aorta” that would require surgery. The rest of the day was *extremely* emotional, but once back home; I contacted my husband to deliver the news and contacted *Children's Heart Clinic* to schedule a CT scan, the suggested next step in the process.

The wonderful nursing staff and doctors @ *Children's Hospital & Clinics*, did their best to ensure we would be well taken care of and allowed us to be there for every aspect, as much as was possible, for Joshua's CT Scan, surgery and his recovery while at the hospital. It also came as a shock to find on the morning of his surgery, April 8, 2010 we were the *very first* surgery to take place in the newly constructed “Cardio Care Unit.” Our son, Joshua has even more energy than before, which amazed us all for his age of 2 ½ years and his blood pressure has remained regulated with medicine since having the surgery. We are so grateful to Dr. McHugh, Dr. Dummer, Dr. Moga and all the other awesome doctors, nurses and staff who helped our son, Joshua Charles *and* us make it through this very stressful, uncertain ordeal.

Sincerely,  
Sara & Todd Nelson

