

## MISSION

CeCe Cares is dedicated to providing joy and support to children living with epilepsy. Our mission is carried out by raising funds for The CeCe Bear Initiative, which donates teddy bears to leading medical centers across America to provide comfort to pediatric epilepsy patients.

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Hello,

As many of you know, CeCe Cares officially launched back in February of this year. Since then, we've been busy recruiting hospitals to take part in the CeCe Bear® Initiative, offering grants to families through our Child Assistance Grant Program, and raising funds to donate CeCe Bears® all over the country. We have four leading medical centers on board already and are on track to have 15-20 hospitals as partners by the year's end; so far, we have been able to offer six grants to families and are looking to award six more this year; and we are pleased to announce that 2,000 CeCe Bears® will be delivered to children this November in honor of National Epilepsy Awareness Month.

We couldn't have done any of this without you, so we would like to offer our sincerest thanks for your continued help and support of the foundation. You all make what we are striving to do possible, and we cannot wait to share the rest of this journey with you.

Best Wishes,

Pete and Sarah Cunningham, Founders

## Grady's Story: CeCe Cares helps Grady communicate and stay cool

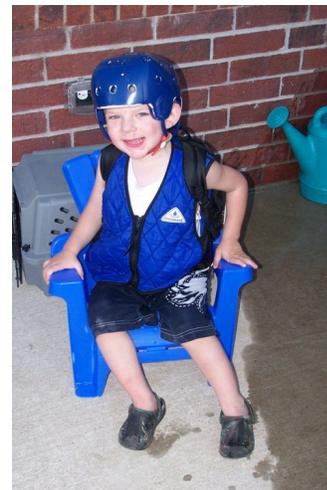
Four-year-old Grady likes to ride his tricycle. He likes playing outside with his six-year-old brother, Dawson, throwing balls and playing at their water table. He likes to drive around the neighborhood with the other kids in their little Power Wheels cars. In a lot of ways, Grady is like any other 4-year-old boy, but this little boy is also fighting hard against epilepsy. He cannot effectively communicate with his friends; during this time last year, the teachers wouldn't let him go outside at playtime because they knew he could get overheated and have a seizure. Grady's mom, Andrea, reached out to us because Grady has already exceeded so many of his doctor's expectations, and she knows he can do more with extra assistance. "Please help me," she wrote, "to help my son Grady, to discover his true potential and allow him to live a more normalized lifestyle."

Grady experienced his first seizure just a few months after his second birthday. During the next few months, he had up to 20 sei-

zures a day and eventually was diagnosed with an LIS-1 gene defect. This disorder leaves Grady taking nine medications twice daily and going through seven hours of physical, speech, and occupational therapy every week. He is nonverbal, on the [Ketogenic diet](#), wears a helmet and leg braces, and carries a backpack for his feeding tube.

Andrea wrote to us requesting a [Techniche Hyperkewl Evaporative cooling vest](#) – to allow Grady to enjoy the summer months outside – and an iPad with specific communication applications. Both were sent to Grady earlier this year, and when we followed up with Andrea to see how he was doing, she couldn't have sounded happier.

Andrea said when Grady first got the iPad he "kind of just pecked at it," but over time he has developed more patience and understanding with it. "It's neat because he knows how to do it," said Andrea, "And when he does it he gets excited because he knows it's something that he's accomplished." Andrea said that Grady has taken on a whole new level of growing,



independence, and confidence just by having something that he can use effectively to communicate.

Grady's cooling vest has allowed him to play outside just about whenever he wants, both at home and with the kids at school. "This summer has really been a good summer for him," said Andrea. "He's nonverbal so sometimes it's hard to see what he wants, but this summer he'll go outside and go to the road and start pointing at the neighbors' houses so he can go play with the other kids." The

## Partner Hospitals



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## Some News and Facts About Epilepsy

- [“Many Kids With Epilepsy Don’t Take Their Medicine”](#)
- [“Precautions Cut Sudden Death Risk of Epilepsy”](#)
- [Childhood Epilepsy Resource Center](#)

## Grady’s Story (cont.)

cooling vest lasts for hours, and anytime Andrea sees that her son might be getting overheated, she just soaks the vest again and puts it back on him. “We’re not afraid to take him outside anymore,” she added.

Andrea is amazed at the growth she’s seen in Grady, especially since getting his iPad and cooling vest. She said a lot of the doctors never gave her much hope that he would be a “normal kid” or told her not to expect a lot, but Grady has done things that have im-

pressed both her and the doctors immensely, like walk up and down stairs and communicate with some sign language. “They’re very impressed,” Andrea said, “And it does make me proud of him because you can challenge him and he’s up for the challenge. Which is really good because most of the time you go to the doctors and they don’t give you very good news, so it’s always great



Grady (R) with his brother, Dawson when they’re like ‘Wow, he can do that?’ and you’re like ‘Yes, he can!’”

## CeCe Cares in the News

- [We began accepting applications for our Child Assistance Grant Program on March 15th](#), and have already been able to award grants to six families this year. We are hoping to help six more by the year’s end.
- We have officially partnered with 4 medical centers across the country for The CeCe Bear® Initiative and will be delivering our first 2,000 bears to children in November for National Epilepsy Awareness Month. We expect to have 15-20 medical center partners by the year’s end.

For information on becoming a **partner hospital**, email [info@cececares.org](mailto:info@cececares.org)

To make an **individual donation**, visit [www.cececares.org](http://www.cececares.org)

To become a **corporate sponsor**, visit the website or email [info@cececares.org](mailto:info@cececares.org)

## Team CeCe takes on RAGBRAI—a 454-mile bike ride across Iowa

**RAGBRAI**, or The Register’s Annual Great Bike Race Across Iowa, is an annual seven-day bike ride across the state. This is the 39th year of the largest and oldest bike ride in the U.S., in which riders average 68 miles per day.

This year’s participants come from all 50 states and 13 foreign countries. Alongside them will be CeCe Cares co-founder Pete Cunningham and his two close friends, Drew Dodd and Joe Masters. The three will be representing “Team CeCe” and have been working hard fundraising in honor of the

event.

Cunningham said RAGBRAI is a great venue for CeCe Cares because there are 20,000 people who will all see them wearing their “Team CeCe” shirts, so they can raise awareness and simply spend some time talking to people. “It opens up dialogue,” said Cunningham, “So hopefully we’ll be able to have fun, educate, and spread the word.”

RAGBRAI starts Sunday, July 24th in Glenwood, Iowa, and will end Saturday, July 30th in Daventry.

Thanks to all of our donors, sponsors, and partners for your continued support!