

September 9, 2011

I met with the parents of a little 7 year old girl named Regina. They live in the town of San Carlos, the same town as our little cancer angel who passed away. Regina is now receiving medical help from Paper Houses for asthma and we hope to help with her other medical needs. Regina also was diagnosed with Down syndrome.

*There is no help or support group in the small town where Regina lives or the farming area surrounding the town. People travel to Acuña for medical help. It is about a 25-minute drive (an hour by bus). **I asked the parents if they could tell me Regina's story as if she were telling it.** They sent me the following letter. I added the photo.*

I am Regina Delgado Marín, I am 7 years old, but the doctors say I only have the mind of a 3 year old. My mom did not know when she was pregnant that I had [Down syndrome](#). It was a shock to mommy and daddy when I was born. Nobody seemed to know what to do with me. Everyone loved me, but they did not know about Down syndrome. I always feel confused and sometimes I feel sad.



When I was born I had trouble breathing and they say this affected my heart. So I had heart surgery before I was even one-year old. Also, when I was born my feet were twisted and I had a lot of trouble breathing. I was diagnosed with bronchial asthma.

By the time I was two, there were marks all over my body. They looked like bruises. The doctors said that I have a blood disease called [purpura](#). I am tired of doctors and hospitals. I know they help me, but I am just tired of doctors and hospitals.

When I was four years old I went to school. I went to a Special Education school, but it was difficult. The school was far away and I had to travel from my farm to the school. It was always either too cold or too hot and I was almost always sick.

Later, I joined a regular school in my town of San Carlos, started kindergarten and was the first child with disabilities in this kindergarten¹. I was always changing rooms and teachers. None of the teachers seemed to know what to do with me so I kept getting moved. They all loved me and wanted to help me, but they just did not know what to do with me. I made many friends and they guided and protected me.

After three years I went to the elementary school and learned to write my name and to count and write my numbers: 1 to 5. I also knew my colors.

I am now in the 2nd grade. I always have trouble in school because I cannot speak well and people cannot understand me. I know what I am trying to say, but they don't understand me so they think I do not know the answers. It is frustrating. I wish I could talk like the other girls. I am not a dummy.

¹ Children begin kindergarten at age 3 and at age 6 they enter the first grade in Mexico.

My feet were not really fixed and I have trouble walking. If I run, I almost always fall. My feet get tired, but I love to dance. Sometimes I fall down, but I get back up and keep trying. Mommy and Daddy want to get my feet fixed but my Daddy works in a maquiladora and the medical insurance does not help with this type of problem. I know they want to fix me, but they can't and it makes them cry.

Mommy and Daddy know that people like me need to see a doctor very frequently because people like me can get very sick, very quickly. But they just do not have enough money.

I do not hear well, I have problems with my teeth and so I cannot eat all the food, just soft things, my skin is very delicate, and often I have a cold or infection.

My mom always says I'm a warrior, and I think yes, because every day I fight for my health, my school, my respect and I fight just to be accepted. I just want everyone to love me.

Regards,

REGINA MARIN DELGADO