

A Charlie Girl Foundation

Charlie's Story

Charlotte Ava – Charlie Girl was born on April 26th, 2011. She was simply beautiful; we couldn't have been more pleased to be a family of four. Our eldest daughter, Elliott, was 18 months old when Charlie was born. After a few days home, enjoying time together and watching Prince William marry Princess Kate, Charlie ended up being readmitted for jaundice.

A few days later, her jaundice cleared and while she was being discharged, the neonatologist had a hunch something else was wrong. It was determined after a few tests that she had a severe heart defect. Charlie was diagnosed at six days old with an unbalanced AV canal and Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome. With this condition, she required three heart surgeries. The first needed to be completed within the first week of life. Charlotte was already six days old. We were immediately transferred to Children's Hospital and Clinics of Minnesota in Minneapolis to the CVCC (Cardiovascular Critical Care Unit). We met with her cardiologist, intensivist and surgeon that same day.

Two days later she had her first open heart surgery. That was the beginning of a grueling summer filled with ups and downs as Charlotte fought for her life. Charlotte continued to require medical intervention over the next four months. She had multiple heart surgeries, stomach surgeries and other medical complications in her short life. She was discharged from the hospital only twice and that time at home totaled less than a week.

Throughout it all, Charlie showed resilience and strength. We loved her from the first moment we saw her and were immensely proud of her as she fought for her life. After four months and three weeks she was very weak, and unable to fight any longer. We kissed her, held her and said our goodbyes. She passed away on September 19th, 2011 in mommy's arms with daddy at her side. We were forever changed. During our time with Charlotte, and our time in the hospital, we found solace in many things: our daughter Elliott, our family, our friends, our church and God, and often, in music. A good friend of ours sent us a number of CD's while we were in the hospital. Within the mix of CD's was The Civil Wars, and though the lyrics of "Poison and Wine" may not make sense as a song choice for a little girl the music was soothing to momma's soul. The line "I always will" stuck, and ever since Charlie's passing that song has resonated. Often when I hear it I think, "I always will love you Charlie"; "I always will miss you Charlie"; and "I promise I will always remember you Charlie". This foundation is a testament to that. We are choosing to always remember Charlotte and her fight for life, and we choose to fight alongside the children still fighting for their lives against congenital heart defects. So though this begins with Charlie's story, it will continue with the stories of many more little ones who we "always will....".

A Charlie Girl Foundation

Our Mission

Our mission is to promote further pediatric heart research and compassionate care for children and families dealing with congenital heart defects. We will work to raise awareness, funds and support for families of children who are hospitalized long-term for congenital heart defects and related issues.

Our Reason

Simply put our daughter Charlotte Ava – “Charlie Girl”

We believe that she lived for a purpose. Strength, peace, compassion, generosity and love are the lights that she shined in her life and through her illness. Now, after her death, we want to reflect those lights and make them grow.

The intent of this foundation is to support families like ours:

- Through the generous donations of others financially supporting children and families faced with the challenges of congenital heart defects
- By inspiring peace during adversity and compassion during hardship through our words, and acts of service to children and families dealing with congenital heart defects
- And by showing love and strength to the children and families fighting heart disease while we raise awareness and support for research-based solutions for congenital heart defects

Our Hope

Per the CDC – Congenital Heart Defects affect nearly 1% of births each year and 25% of the babies born with CHD have critical cases and will require surgery within the first year of life. We know by experience this can cause a great emotional, physical and financial strain on families. It is our hope to step in and support these children and families at such a critical time.

A Charlie Girl Foundation

Registered Office:
11591 McKusick Rd. N.
Stillwater, MN 55082

Date:

Name of Child:

Birthdate:

Name of Parent/Guardian:

Siblings (Names and Ages):

Who else is living in the home with the Child:

Child's Address:

Parent/Guardian Phone Number:

Email Address of Parent/Guardian:

Parent/Guardian's Current Employment Status:

Any Current/Outstanding Financial Burdens (please explain):

Diagnosis:

Age at Diagnosis:

Name of Diagnostic or Treating Physician:

Name of Hospital or Treating Facility:

Current length of Hospitalization:

Past length of Hospitalizations:

Anticipated Hospitalizations:

What is the Child's Current Condition/Prognosis:

Physician Remarks (if any):

Does the child have a CaringBridge/Facebook Page (please share):
Please Share the Child's Story:

THANKS FOR SHARING YOUR CHILD WITH US.
Sincerely,
Ryan & Kelly McManimon
& the board of A Charlie Girl Foundation

*Attached is a release of information form: If chosen we would like to feature your child's story and photos on our blog/website. If this is something you are not interested in please let us know.

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Release of Information:

I _____, give permission for (child's name here) _____ story to be shared on Charliegirl.org. I agree to share and exchange information with "A Charlie Girl Foundation" in order that they may feature (child's name here) _____ for the purpose of providing awareness of Congenital Heart Defects and the work this organization is doing to raise money and awareness for children affected by it. This may include sharing information both written and pictured on Charliegirl.org; A Charlie Girl Foundation's Facebook & Instagram Pages _____ (*initial*).

I understand that my consent is valid as long as my child is being sponsored by "A Charlie Girl Foundation".

I also understand that I can revoke this consent at any time.

I confirm that _____ has explained the purpose of this form to me and I understand its content. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____ Date _____

