

2 0 1 9

SUMMER

Operation  Smile
Canada

Smile Report

TEARS OF JOY

INSIDE

**Missions Change
Lives****Setting Surgical
Standards in Vietnam****Fasting for
Smiles**

WITH HOPE IN HER EYES, NURY HOLDS HER BABY GIRL LUCIANA AFTER A SUCCESSFUL CLEFT OPERATION.

Mothers like Nury feel helpless when safe and affordable surgery isn't available for their children. Nury's fear of what her daughter's future would hold is why our comprehensive care centres are so essential to our work. They give us the opportunity to treat children year-round and offer families, like Luciana's, hope of a brighter future. Your partnership with us delivers more than a smile – the kindness within your heart saved Luciana and her family from a lifetime of heartache and despair.

As soon as Luciana was born, Nury understood that she would face health issues and social isolation if her cleft condition wasn't corrected. Nury quickly learned about Operation Smile's comprehensive care centre in Bogotá, Colombia from a pediatrician at the clinic where Luciana was born.

Care centres help us meet the need for cleft surgeries and a variety of other services young patients will need such as dental care, speech therapy, nutrition, psychology,

orthodontics and pediatrics. They're an essential part of our life-changing work, especially for children with complex cleft conditions like Luciana.

*Bogotá's Comprehensive Care Centre*

Story continues on the next page...

For Nury, Bogotá's care centre gave her the reassurance and hope she desperately needed as Luciana prepared for her surgery. The team at the care centre supported the family through Luciana's surgery and follow-up care. Nury knew her daughter was in good hands.

Today, Luciana is a vibrant and healthy little girl who loves playing in the park just like any other child. Says Nury, "I am very happy, Luciana is really beautiful. As I hoped for, and as I imagined."



GLOBAL IMPACT

Every day, the steadfast commitment of our global community of volunteers, staff, partners and supporters allows Operation Smile to restore the health and dignity of our patients and to change the lives of so many.

While we provide exceptional surgical care for patients and families affected by cleft lip and cleft palate, we simultaneously work to strengthen the infrastructure of the surgical care systems in the communities where we work.

We were in Hanoi, Vietnam, on April 2, 2019 to announce the establishment of eight new guidelines for patient

safety and surgical care. Co-created by Operation Smile and Vietnam's Ministry of Health, the guidelines set standards for safe surgery that will impact the entire country and improve the level of care that patients and families receive. The guidelines are now available for adoption at 1,450 medical facilities in 63 provinces, potentially affecting up to three million surgeries per year.

It was a momentous occasion for all of us because, over the past 30 years, we've been able to enhance the health policy across Vietnam. Side by side with the Vietnamese people, all of us are striving to provide the care that we would really want for our own families, for our own children.

With our worldwide group of volunteers and global partners like Vietnam's Ministry of Health, the World Health Organization, U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the Lancet Commission, G4 Alliance and Safe Surgery 2020, these new standards set a benchmark for patient safety and safe surgery care for our entire world. We are so honoured to be a part of that, and we couldn't do it without your generous partnership with us. Thank you!



Bill and Kathy Magee, Co-Founders, Operation Smile.



THE SMILE MOVEMENT GROWS

I am blessed every day knowing that you are by our side helping to give children with cleft lips and cleft palates the smiles they deserve. I witnessed this miraculous work first-hand this spring on two missions in the Dominican Republic and Colombia. Operation Smile Canada staff and medical volunteers were also part of missions in Honduras, Bolivia, the Philippines, Morocco, Vietnam and Madagascar where hundreds of patients received life-changing surgeries. Thank you for changing the futures of so many deserving children.

The **Saskatchewan Rush Lacrosse Club** knows how important a new smile can be to a child. They ushered in spring by launching our annual Longest Day of SMILES® campaign in Saskatoon on March 30th. The Saskatchewan Rush team and superfan Ken Rosin raised nearly \$75,000 for the campaign, which ended on June 21st (the longest day of the year), which raised \$240,000 and created 1,000 new smiles around the world.



The Longest Day of SMILES® touched communities and workplaces across Canada thanks to the outstanding support from The Weather Network, Johnson & Johnson employees, Align Technologies, Dr. Keith Kerr and the many Canadians like you who saw into their hearts to give children new smiles.

A SMILE movement has started with the Longest Day of SMILES® and together we celebrate all the smiles you've helped create over the past year. Thank you.

Mark Climie-Elliott, CFRE
CEO, Operation Smile Canada

ELISA

Jean and Sidonie had little hope of a healthy future for their two-year old daughter Elisa. Born with a cleft lip and cleft palate, Elisa's family was overjoyed to learn they could receive the gift of free and safe surgery from Operation Smile during a medical mission. After her surgery Elisa's sweet personality began to shine through. She loves pretending to cook for her family and neighbours. Elisa's now a vibrant young girl with a beautiful smile and a brighter future. Having witnessed the life-changing power of Elisa's new smile, Sidonie connects other children with cleft conditions in her village to Operation Smile so they can have the surgery they need and deserve.



Sidonie, Jean and Elisa



Elisa from Madagascar

MISSIONS CHANGE LIVES

Volunteer Debby Potter in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, with a young patient

Almost every week somewhere in the world, the incredible medical volunteers of Operation Smile are on missions performing life-changing surgeries for children in desperate need of the healing power of a new smile.

Debby Potter and her daughter Sierra recently witnessed first-hand the life-changing power of a medical mission. This mother and daughter team have been volunteering with Operation Smile Canada for many years, and our cause is close to their hearts. Debby was born with a cleft lip which was corrected when she was a baby.

Debby and Sierra spent a week with the Operation Smile mission in Honduras where 155 surgeries were performed. “I’ve always been a dedicated volunteer ambassador in Canada and I thought I understood what Operation Smile did. But going on a mission and seeing the team in action for the first time really opened my eyes to the full scope of a mission. There’s a tremendous amount of education that goes on before any child heads into surgery. In fact, it’s given to everyone who shows up at a mission whether their child receives surgery or not.

The surgery itself was more complicated than I had imagined. Our surgeons are true masters at their craft. And there’s lots of care provided after surgery and before discharge. Parents and families receive detailed information on every little aspect of a child’s recovery, but it goes beyond that. There’s general health information, guidelines for dental care and oral health. For many families, this is the first time they’re receiving this kind of information. The mission team spends a lot of time with families after surgery so the kids have the best chance at a successful recovery. It’s 360-degree care surrounding the child and the family.

The mission experience really made me realize just how lucky I am to live in Canada. It made me appreciate that not everyone has the kind of life my family does. The mission changed my ‘world view’ for the better. Now I don’t sweat the small stuff as much as I used to. It has also helped me put a lot more things in my life into perspective.”

For her 19-year-old daughter Sierra, the mission had impact too. “I was able to share this experience with



Debby and Sierra visit a family, post-surgery

my daughter which I’ll never forget – that was amazing. From a young age, she was interested in what I was doing volunteer-wise – that’s just how she is. Growing up she always volunteered, but going on the mission really confirmed for her that giving back was so important. It changed the course of her life. It affirmed for her a future career path working in health care because she really wants to make a difference in people’s lives. And I think the experience opened her up to some bittersweet realities of the world.”

NORMA

EIGHT-YEAR-OLD NORMA SHARES HER BRAND NEW SMILE.

Norma is a member of an indigenous group known as the Huichol people who live in the Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range in Jalisco, Mexico. She never received surgery to repair her cleft lip because her parents didn't know that free surgery was available. Norma and her father Rafael travelled 13 hours to reach the mission in Guadalajara. Travelling so far from home made him feel worried, but after he saw the way the medical volunteers treated Norma, he quickly forgot his fears. "After I got to know the hospital and the people, I felt relieved," he said.

Thanks to Operation Smile's partnership with the local government, patient recruitment efforts are being implemented and successfully bringing more children like Norma to our missions. When asked what he would do if he saw another child with a cleft condition, Rafael said he would tell them to come get surgery from Operation Smile because "you fix things here."

Follow us on social

[f /operationsmilecanada](https://www.facebook.com/operationsmilecanada)

[@operationsmilecanada](https://www.instagram.com/operationsmilecanada)

Norma with her father Rafael before surgery
Photo: Laura Gonzalez

SMILE PARTNERS — A FAMILY AFFAIR

Irene and John* know all too well the challenge of having a child with a cleft condition. Back in the 1960's, their son Joseph was born with a bilateral cleft lip and palate. Just 22 years old at the time, Irene vividly remembers that "feeding was a real problem. We used anything we could. We used to feed him with a syringe sometimes, or an eye dropper, but the formula would just dribble out of his mouth. There was very little information about cleft at the time but a wonderful nurse friend dug up information for us and was a very valuable resource. We really didn't know what we were dealing with or how best to take care of our son."

Fortunate to be living in London, Ontario, Joseph had his first lip surgery just three days after his birth; a second lip surgery at three

months, and his palate repaired at 18 months. "We had wonderful plastic surgeons in London" said John. "We felt very fortunate at the time because Joseph was born during the era of the thalidomide babies, and I thought their condition was more life-altering than our son's."

"Giving to Operation Smile seemed like a good way to help others who don't have access to the care we have access to," says Irene. "We're retired now, so giving monthly is easy on our wallet and just suits us." Both John and Irene are **SMILE PARTNER** monthly donors, and their son donates as well.

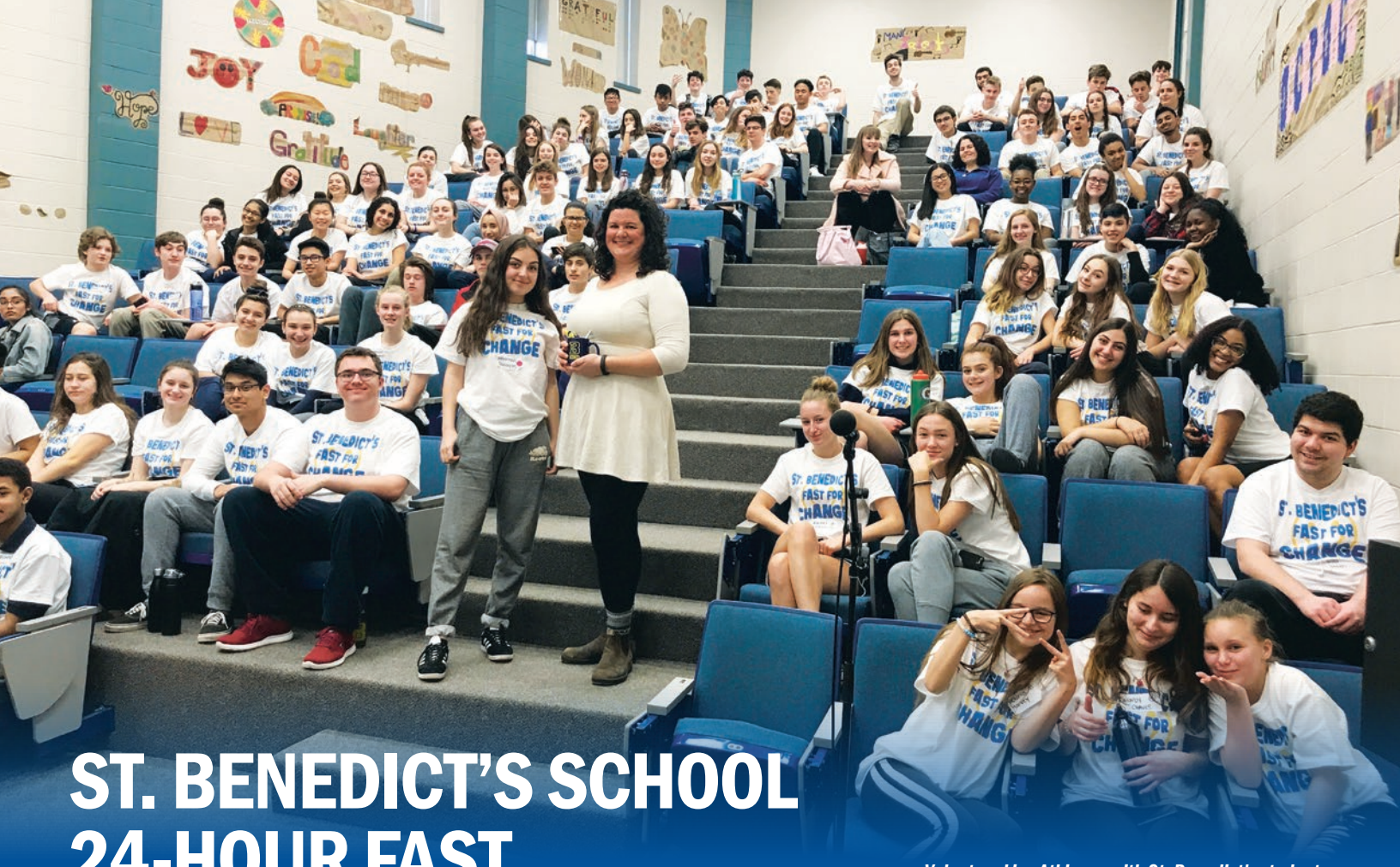
"It's a cause that is near and dear to our hearts." While giving is a family affair, cleft conditions are too. Their

14-year old granddaughter Emily was born with a cleft lip and at a family reunion, Irene and John found out that a cousin of Irene's father was also born with a cleft condition. "Emily has just finished a round of orthodontia, and she's doing really great," says Irene.

You can join Irene and John in helping children with little or no access to cleft surgery by becoming a monthly **SMILE PARTNER** donor today. Donating monthly is easy, convenient, and saves administrative costs. Any amount helps, and a donation of only \$20 per month will help provide one life-changing surgery for a child thanks to your generosity.

To become a **SMILE PARTNER** right now, call Ginelle Alvaro at: **647-952-8121** or toll-free at: **1-844-376-4530**

*names have been changed at the donor's request



Volunteer Lisa Atkinson with St. Benedict's students

ST. BENEDICT'S SCHOOL 24-HOUR FAST

St. Benedict Catholic Secondary School in Cambridge, Ontario is one of 28 Operation Smile student clubs across the country which raise funds and awareness about cleft conditions. In March 2019, over 70 students fasted for 24 hours and collected pledges from their friends and families, raising \$6,500 for Operation Smile Canada. That's enough to provide 27 children with free, safe and

timely cleft lip and cleft palate surgeries! The team was joined by Lisa Atkinson, an Operation Smile Volunteer Nurse. Lisa shared her volunteer experiences and taught students more about Operation Smile and the student programs available to them. Congratulations and thank you St. Benedict's for changing the lives of 27 children.

WE'RE HERE TO SERVE YOU

We're here to serve you. From making a donation on the phone, updating your contact information, changing your monthly donor credit card or banking information, to discussing the impact of your gift or how to have lasting impact with a gift made through your will, we're always so pleased to hear from you.



Contact us
by phone:

Toll-free: 1.844.376.4530 or
Local: 647.696.0600



By email:

ca-supporters@operationsmile.org



By mail or
in person:

375 University Ave., Suite 204
Toronto, ON M5G 2J5



Visit our
website:

www.operationsmile.ca

Operation Smile
Canada

[f/operationsmilecanada](https://www.facebook.com/operationsmilecanada) [@operationsmilecanada](https://www.instagram.com/operationsmilecanada)