



In April 1989, Nick was born with Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome, a fancy name for a really messed up heart. He had a type of surgery called the Norwood Procedure at five days old, then a right pulmonary repair at three and half months old, which included a seven weeks stay on a respirator,

because of a damaged diaphragm nerve. Nick went on to have another surgery to repair the left pulmonary just after his first birthday. A few months before he turned two it was decide that Nick could only survive if he had a heart transplant. After a six weeks wait, Nick received his new heart.

Before being transplanted Nick was a blue color, only having an eighty-five percent oxygen level. Immediately after the transplant Nick was a nice healthy pink color. The first year after transplant was difficult. We made many midnight trips to the hospital, but in time the trips decreased. Nick suffered mostly from sinus troubles and ear infections, nothing serious, just troublesome. Nick grew and started pre-school, even rode the bus to school his first day of kindergarten. He has learned to swim, snow ski, water ski, and has seen forty-eight of the fifty

states and thirteen countries in Europe. He has been a member of Team Georgia at eight of the Transplant Olympic. He is a manager for his high school football team and plays tennis. Today, sixteen years later and eighteen birthdays later, Nick is doing well. Heart transplants are not a fix, but a treatment, so we still worry about rejection and the future. But with all things said and done, it has been wonderful to see Nick grow up, which would not have been possible without the transplant.

Now the issue is: Can we afford to send him to college?

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