



Shepherd's Field
CHILDREN'S VILLAGE
牧羊地儿童村

Heartbeat

June 2017



"The Children's Dream" by Teacher Wang

Everyone has dreams. One may want to be a scientist, another an artist, a dancer or an actor. But our children at Shepherd's Field dream a different dream – to have a Forever Family. They all want a mom, a dad and brothers and sisters of their own.

Today in music class, we learned how to sing a new song, and some of the lyrics went: "Today, my dad took the family on a trip." When we got to this part of the song, all the children immediately stopped singing. They stared at me blankly as the music continued to play.

I could tell what the kids were thinking, so I asked them, "What does a father look like?" They looked at each other and replied, "I don't know." At that moment, the room became silent and my heart went out to these beautiful children. They had absolutely no idea what a real dad was supposed to be like, and I wanted to just hold them in my arms.

Then I asked them another question, "Do you know what a mom is like?" The children said, "Moms cook good food for us, study with us, wash our clothes for us, and read us story books." So the kids don't know what a father is, and they think a mother is someone who cooks and cleans. This is probably because they're surrounded by women – like all the aiyis and teachers – but don't have many males around as father figures.

I wanted to explore this further, so I asked them: "What do you think your ideal dad is like?" Here are some of their replies:

Charlie: "My dad buys me a football."

Corey: "My dad is a good driver, and takes me to the beach to go swimming."

Luke: "My dad is very kind and soft spoken."

Ed: "My dad is good at fixing toys and bikes."

Francis: "My dad is very strong and can pick me up."



After the children brainstormed about their dads, they talked about their dream homes and having pets, like small dogs and rabbits. When the kids were talking about their dreams, their eyes were filled with hope and happiness. I hope their dreams will come true one day, and they'll all have their own home – with a mom and dad – the most important people in life.

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Samuel Walks, Talks and Signs

Samuel (Dang Liming) arrived at Shepherd's Field in early January after spending more than four years at another foster home in Beijing. He had surgery on his clubbed feet in 2013, and currently wears ankle foot orthoses (AFOs) to help provide him with additional stability. Shortly after his surgery, Samuel began receiving weekly therapy sessions at **LIH Olivia's Place in Beijing**, and over the course of his treatment, learned to walk independently. Currently, Samuel walks with a slightly abnormal gait, but overall has great gross motor abilities and strength. However, when he arrived at Shepherd's Field he still had some developmental and speech delays, which he's been working on with our Therapy team. Thankfully, Olivia's Place shared all of his records with our team, and made additional recommendations for improving his speech and communication skills. Since he began therapy here, Samuel has done exceptionally well.



In mid-December, a volunteer from the U.S. came to Shepherd's Field to help teach some of our therapy kids American Sign Language (ASL), as well as help them improve their speech and verbal communication skills. They chose Samuel for some one-on-one and group speech therapy, and learning American Sign Language has helped him visualize communication – he's improved his ability to communicate his desires not only in therapy, but also at home and in school. Samuel's speech and pronunciation skills have greatly improved, and he currently knows more than 50 signs in ASL! We're very proud of Samuel and all the progress he's made – now it's time to find him a Forever Family of his own.

Welcome to Shepherd's Field!



Ella

Ella (Song Yuxuan) and **Hanna (Song Yicai)** arrived at Shepherd's Field on May 9. Both of them are from Yangxi, in Guangdong Province. Two-year-old Ella was born with a deformity to her right ear, and also suffers from cleft palate. Hanna is eight months old, and was born with a heart condition.

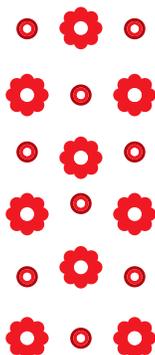
We welcomed **Desmond (Xu Kangzhong)** and **Mico (He Qianpei)** to SFCV on March 17 from Taiyuan. He just had surgery for a cleft lip and palate, and is now recovering well. We hope that Mico (nine months old) will also go for her cleft lip surgery soon.



Desmond



Hanna



Mico



Desmond (Xu Kang Zhong) had successful surgery for his cleft lip and palate on May 8, and he's now recovering well back at SFCV.



Amanda (Si Xin Fang) continues treatment for her lip and neck tumors, and is so patient about it. This young lady is an inspiration! While staying at the hospital, Amanda caught lice. Unfortunately, their protocol is to shave a

patient's hair off, to prevent the lice from spreading to other patients. We ask for your prayers for Amanda at this time.



Following scans and other tests, it was confirmed that **Hanna (Song Yicai)** suffers from pulmonary atresia, with a large VSD and PDA. She'll return to the hospital for a further CT scan on her heart, after which a better recommendation for treatment can be given.



Ella (Song Yuxuan) came to SFCV with a deformity to her right ear and cleft palate. After a physical examination, it was

revealed that she also suffers from malnutrition and hypermyotonia. However, after coming to Shepherd's Field, she's making great progress.

Katy Meets Her New Family



We're very excited to announce that **Katy (Yang Kaiyao)** – now **Kaylee** – has found her Forever Family! This happy little girl has been smiling with us since August 2014, but nothing compares with the happiness she felt when she recently met her new family for the first time. She now has a mom and two big sisters, and a dad who's a doctor! Kaylee will be missed by all of us here at Shepherd's Field, but we're very happy she now has a family to love and care for her forever.





Preparing to Perform

“Yay – it’s Children’s Day!” Over the past few weeks, the children have been preparing for one of their favorite days of the entire year, and their excitement has deepened their commitment to perform for Children’s Day. When asked about this special day by their teachers, the kids first spoke about what they loved to do to celebrate. They had a lot of ideas, so the teachers assigned performances where they could each express themselves. Some children re-wrote a Chinese saying about family, to illustrate what they think about their Shepherd’s Field family; and others wrote an English poem all about what they think true friendship is – and they’re reciting it in English!

They’re all hard at work rehearsing dances, a fashion show and even a drama of the Three Little Pigs. One of our newer members, **Hector (Dang Guo Bu)** has loved being part of his first Children’s Day rehearsals at SFCV, and has taken on every challenge with excitement and joy! He’s loved being creative and performing with his friends, and he’ll even be singing a solo! All the children have loved the process of rehearsing, and truly enjoy showing off their talents. This should be one Children’s Day to remember!



Shepherd’s Field Greenhouse Blossoms

Thanks to our generous donors and the help of many, we’ve been blessed with a very successful Spring harvest here at Shepherd’s Field. To be as sustainable as possible, we’re focusing most of our efforts on our aquaponics greenhouse and the raised garden beds outside. We’ve been able to harvest our winter greens from the greenhouse, so our kitchen can transform them into treats for our children and staff. We’re now focusing on starting the summer crops in the greenhouse, and the school kids have been a huge help. They prepared the garden beds and planted their tiny seedlings, then watched them sprout. As they cared for their young plants, the children learned all about plant growth and the basic needs of gardening – as well as teamwork and patience.



We are grateful for your prayers and financial support!

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