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November 30, 2010

Dear Friend:

It's the middle of the night and you are awakened by piercing cries coming through the baby monitor lying next to you. You rub your tired eyes, throw back the warm, cozy covers and get up. As you feel your way down the darkened hall to your daughter's room, you wonder if she needs to be changed, if she's hungry or thirsty and needs a snack, or if she just needs to be comforted and helped back to sleep.

If you are a parent, you can relate to the scenario above, but what if your child was twenty-two, and you still needed that baby monitor, still woke up in the middle of the night to change, feed, or soothe him or her?

This is the reality for many families caring for an adult child with a physical disability. These families lovingly care for their children, but sometimes they need a break from the demanding routine of meeting their needs. You can provide that break through your support of the Angel Campaign.

By donating \$25, \$50 or more, you can give families in our community the chance to catch their breath and rest and allow a young adult with a disability some time to socialize with other young adults living with disabilities.

Through your support, you can help families like the Parks who have been using The Ottawa Rotary Home's services since 1995. Here is what Dave has to say about the Rotary Home:

"Hi everyone,

My name is Dave Parks. I am the father of two beautiful girls. Kristy is 27 years old and probably like your daughters or sons. She was able to run, play, talk, when she was younger and has grown up being able to work and live independently. My second daughter is Jodie. Jodie is 22 years old, and loves life, loves her family, but there is one big difference. Jodie was born with Muscular Dystrophy and Cerebral Palsy. She has had surgery on both hips and both ankles; she had a spinal fusion and a bowel blockage three years ago that doctors thought she would not make it through due to infection. I would never, ever have thought that this could happen, since there was no known history of MD or CP in our family. Please don't misunderstand me. I love both my daughters equally and with all my heart. I hope to keep Jodie living at home as long as my wife Ronalee and I can care for her. Unfortunately, Kristy and Jodie's mom passed away when they were young.

Jodie loves music, dancing in her chair, colouring, going for walks, giving hugs and being with her family. She is wheelchair dependent, requires continuous supervision and relies on us for all her care, bathing, food preparation, toileting etc. She can speak a few words and knows some sign language.

When Jodie was younger, it was easier to care for her needs. She was active in a special needs class and had the opportunity to attend the Rotary Home, usually one weekend a month and even some full week visits. This gave us a much needed break. We actually got a full night's sleep, not needing to get up to reposition and care for her needs. No need to have a baby monitor in our room, listening for any problems she might have during the night.



Unfortunately our situation has changed now that Jodie is over 21. The weekend a month is gone and there are no one week breaks – unless caring people in our community support the Angel Campaign and make it possible for the Rotary Home to extend their services to young adults over 21 . . . like Jodie.

I hope Jodie will be able to go back to the Rotary Home a little more often to meet and be with her friends. We could really use a break for a weekend, or an occasional week off to wind down. We really cherish the respite we receive.

Jodie is one of the hundreds of young adults whose twinkling laughter and bright smile have filled the Home over the years and who is now unable to access the government funded services we offer. Families like the Parks can no longer count on regular respite breaks as the Rotary Home is only able to offer a limited program of adult respite services at this time.

Your support can change that. This holiday season, just as Jodie and her friends are little angels to their families, you too can be an angel by completing the accompanying reply card and making a donation to the Angel Campaign today.

Your gift will help make sure families like Jodie's have access to the out-of-home respite care that is so vital to their health and well-being. Please give generously to this year's Angel Campaign.

Sincerely,

Chloe Hillier
Director of Development

P.S. There are hundreds of families in the region caring for adults with disabilities at home who could benefit from respite care today. Your donation can make a real difference in their lives. Please fill out the response card below and mail in your donation today or donate online at www.orhfoundation.ca.

Supporting the Ottawa Rotary Home with Purpose, Passion & Commitment.

Charitable Number 89418 7962 RR0001