



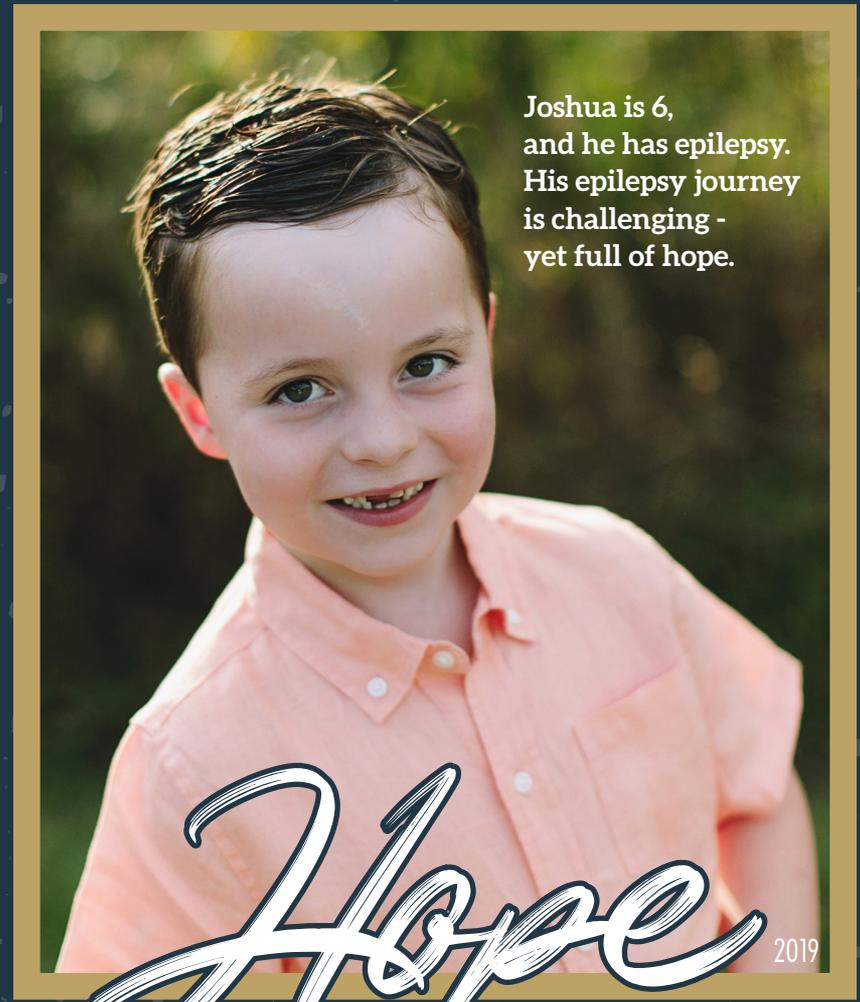
The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan leads the fight to overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy and to accelerate therapies to stop seizures, find cures, and save lives.



**EPILEPSY
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Michigan



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Joshua is 6,
and he has epilepsy.
His epilepsy journey
is challenging -
yet full of hope.

Hope

2019



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Our epilepsy journey has been a difficult one. Over the past 3 years it has become so engrained in our lives that we can't imagine life without epilepsy.



It was August of 2016 - just a month before Joshua's third birthday - and we were on vacation in Traverse City. Joshua was having a snack and looking at the water when he suddenly began to choke. We quickly realized this was a much different type of "choking." **He started shaking and fell to the ground. We noticed his eyes rolling back into his head. It only lasted about a minute, but it felt like forever.**

We called an ambulance and were taken to the hospital, where they took blood work and observed him for a few hours. Then, we were sent home with a prescription and advised to follow up with his pediatrician. **We felt helpless.**

We prayed it was a one-time occurrence but exactly one week later, Joshua had another one. **Then he had a third**

seizure, this time in the bathtub. Luckily we were right there, able to safely remove him from the tub and lay him down.

Once we got in to see the neurologist, they explained that Joshua has epilepsy. We cancelled any plans that would involve us being away from him. We got up several times per night or slept in the same bed with him to make sure he was okay. **This made for sleepless nights and endless worry.**

We went through the ringer with his medication trying to get his grand mal seizures under control. **Then we were informed he has the beginning of Electrical Status Epilepticus during Sleep (ESES).** This is a condition that impacts Joshua's ability to "record" memories during sleep and impacts his speech development.

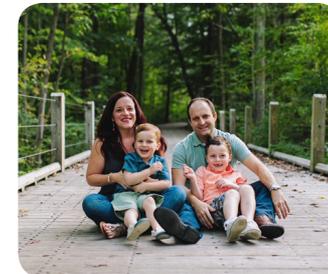
Many people think that epilepsy is simply people having seizures, but there is so much more to it than that. When Joshua had his first seizure, we were unaware of the many different forms that a seizure can take. Many people may think that epilepsy is not life-threatening, and we were some of those people. Once we learned about Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP), a whole new list of worries and concerns opened up.

Thankfully, throughout everything, we've been able to turn to the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan to help us navigate the challenges that we face.

They have been an incredible source of information to help us answer some of our most difficult questions.

Everyone that works at the Foundation goes out of their way to make us feel like our journey matters. They have put us in touch with the latest information and helped us connect with other families on their epilepsy journey. It's incredible how this community comes together! You truly feel like you are not alone. **Our family, like so many others, is lucky to have the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan available to us.**

Joshua is now in kindergarten, and we are optimistic that this is going to be an amazing year for him. We are hoping that there will be many positive moments to help erase some of the negative ones that we've faced during this journey. **And ultimately, our hope is that one day Joshua will have seizure freedom and that he'll live a full, healthy, and happy life. We encourage others to join in the fight and support the Foundation's mission along with us, so as many people as possible can experience this hope too.** - The VanTiem Family



Thank you for taking the time to read about Joshua's journey. Our hope is that one day there will be a cure so that children like Joshua won't have to worry about when the next seizure will happen and how it will affect their lives. But we need your help to make that happen.

At the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan, we understand the challenges of living with epilepsy and how life changing it can be to make the right connections. Every day we strive to connect the epilepsy community with the tools they need to best manage this condition. We work to connect families like the VanTiem's with an incredible epilepsy network that understands the journey ahead. Our commitment to these connections has no bounds; we meet with legislators, schools, employers, community leaders, etc. to do everything we can to make the world easier for someone with epilepsy to live in and thrive.

Please support our mission and these life-saving connections by making your gift today.

Thank you,



Brianna Romines | President