

## Mateo's Kids

is a charitable organization whose purpose is to help keep hope alive for sick children and their families that are not eligible for help from other charitable agencies. Our goal is to provide both financial support for a sick child's medical needs and emotional support for their family.

## Our Philosophy

"Keeping Hope Alive"

## Our Vision Statement

No child should be left without help... through hard work, thoughtful stewardship and single minded focus on the needs of these sick children and their families, Mateo's Kids strives to make a lasting difference in the lives of these children, their families, our communities, our world... one need at a time.

## Our Values

1. Mutual Respect
2. Trust
3. Excellence
4. Accountability
5. Faith
6. Hope
7. Love

## Our Charity Mission

In an atmosphere of love and concern, Mateo's Kids, was founded in 2005, in loving memory of Mateo Casimiro Rotger. This non for profit charity is dedicated to serving the needs of "severely" sick children and their families in Illinois who are not able to receive help from other charitable organizations... offering them financial assistance through their times of need. Children from other states or countries may apply for charity care consideration and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

# Mateo's Story

On March 17, 2005, our 5 year old son, Mateo Casimiro, was diagnosed with a rare, inoperable brain tumor. Two weeks prior to that day, Mateo was having a dull, infrequent "funny feeling" that ran up and down his spine. His primary pediatrician did not see any symptoms of any injury or any neurological problems. Despite the doctor's absence of concern, we insisted that an x-ray be taken.



Mateo was diagnosed with a "bilateral thalamic tumor" about 5cm in size, and was treated at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago. Besides a very slight tremor in his hands (which is one of two symptoms of the tumor, the other being hydrocephalus), Mateo was a bright little boy.

The Doctors informed us that this type of brain tumor was rare and that there have only been about 15 cases in the last 20 years. Because the tumor is in the thalamus (which controls consciousness and motor senses), surgically removing the tumor is out of the question.

As for Mateo's back pain, no one could really explain that. They labeled it as Thalamic Pain Syndrome. Since his diagnosis and despite medications, Mateo still had frequent and severe

back pain, causing him to scream and shake with unbelievable intensity. Some days were "good days" where he would only experience about 10 episodes; some days he had over a hundred. We tried to simply explain to Mateo what was causing his pain and about his tumor, but being a 5 year old, Mateo didn't fully understand. He frequently woke up at night telling us that "the monsters are

grabbing me... they are talking to me and telling me that they have me and won't let me go."

Mateo had a stereo tactic or closed biopsy of the tumor on March 29. The result was promising at first, but after weeks of chemotherapy, the tumor had actually grown 25%.

Despite everyone's hopes, prayers, and support, Mateo lost his life on September 25, 2005. Mateo is missed very much but lives on in our new found organization to help other families in need.

