

Suzie Moorman - Forever Dancing in our Hearts  
By: Sierra Hoeger, Assistant Branding Director

On August 24, 2020, Iowa State Dance Marathon members received the heartbreaking news that miracle kiddo Suzie Moorman had passed away.

Suzie spent the last months of her life battling serious, life-threatening health problems. After a long fight, she passed away on August 23, 2020.

Suzie was born with holoprosencephaly, a brain disorder in which the forebrain of the embryo fails to develop into two hemispheres, as well as hydrocephalus, which is too much water surrounding the brain. Fetuses with this diagnosis rarely survive the birthing process. However, Suzie fought hard and was able to live to see her 16th birthday.

When taking Suzie home from the hospital after she was born, the Moorman family was told she would live a short life and that she would never walk, talk, see or hear. The doctors did not think that she had a brain. Refusing to believe those words and hoping to defy all odds, Suzie's parents, Heather and Mark Moorman, decided to get a second opinion at the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital. There, she was able to receive her second chance at life. Her family was finally able to find some hope in Suzie's future.

Suzie had a shunt placed in her head when she was only a month and a half old. This allowed water to drain from the brain, which doctors were hoping would alleviate pressure and give her comfort. This also allowed her brain to expand to its true form. Although Suzie did not have a full brain, this procedure allowed for her to start making progress in her development.

Not long after this, Heather and Mark discovered Early ACCESS. This is a state of Iowa program that helps children with specific health issues be educationally prepared for a school setting. Suzie had many professionals, therapists and services that helped her learn and grow.

Throughout elementary school, Suzie worked very hard to learn to read, write and play. All of these were very hard for her since her progress was a bit slower. She never gave up and had many amazing teachers and associates encourage her along the way. As Suzie built up her strength, she was finally able to hold her head up, sit on her own and learned to walk at seven years old.

The Moorman Family is almost Dance Marathon royalty! They are always willing to share their incredible story year after year, Big Event after Big Event. Suzie could always be heard singing "Come to the Table," by Sidewalk Prophets, at the miracle kiddo talent show, receiving praises and applause after each performance.

Suzie was described as resilient, a ray of sunshine, sassy and spunky. Suzie Moorman will be honored alongside dozens of other miracle kiddos who fought long and hard for their lives, at the beginning of Big Events in the future, during the candlelight vigil.

Suzie will forever and always be dancing in our hearts. We will Love Like Suzie today, tomorrow, and every day forward.