

NEWS • CHINA CARE JOURNAL
THE HAPPIEST BABY

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Ysabelle Sosing has always enjoyed volunteering. When she arrived at the University of Texas-Austin she sought ways to continue giving back and discovered China Care. Sosing immersed herself in her local China Care club by holding playgroups for adopted Chinese children and relished the idea of doing more for these children. As an intern she was able to do just that. In the story that follows, she shares her bond with one special orphan.



Lan was one of the most beautiful babies I had ever seen. Her smile filled up the entire room. The first time that I ever visited the toddlers, I remember being drawn in by her charming laughter. I recall feeling just as happy as she was; it was contagious! Her joy was not the only noticeable thing about her. Built into this tiny bundle was a gigantic amount of determination, too.

Little Orchid, which is what her name fittingly translates to, was born with spina bifida, a neural tube defect caused by the failure of the spine to close completely during the mother's pregnancy. She had surgery to have a sac removed and to close an open lesion, both located on her lower back. The lesion caused nerve damage which resulted in clubbed feet. After the neurosurgery, Lan saw a bone doctor about her feet. The doctor suggested waiting until Lan could stand to see what needed to be done to move her feet to the normal position.

When I first saw Lan, she was standing up with her ankles turned inward. She was holding onto the leg of a booster chair in order to stand. The remarkable thing about this beautiful baby was the fact she didn't allow her disability to stop her from trying to stand up. From the start, I knew she was a fighter.



China Care started to do sessions of casting to correct Lan's feet shortly after I arrived. When I went to visit her in the beginning of the sessions, I noticed that Lan was not as happy as usual. She must have been in a lot of pain! Nevertheless, Little Orchid was a fighter and her happiness eventually came through.

After completing three sessions of casting, Lan's smile and joy returned stronger than ever. It was as if her casts did not even exist to her anymore! She would get around without allowing the casts to be a barrier to her movement. And, the casting was working! Her right foot moved to the normal upright position when I was still in China. While her left foot still turned inward by the time I left, the China Care staff were optimistic that it would only take time before that foot moved, too.

I was completely astounded by this baby girl every time I saw her. I loved being around her and playing with her. I truly admire Lan for keeping her joy in the toughest times. It is unbelievable knowing what she has gone through in only one year of life. I feel that she already understands the concept of living life to the fullest. I hope to see Lan again one day with a family of her own to love and care for her.