



little  
mended hearts

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Amanda Stewart: mother to heart kid Cuyler, Evelyn and Reilly.



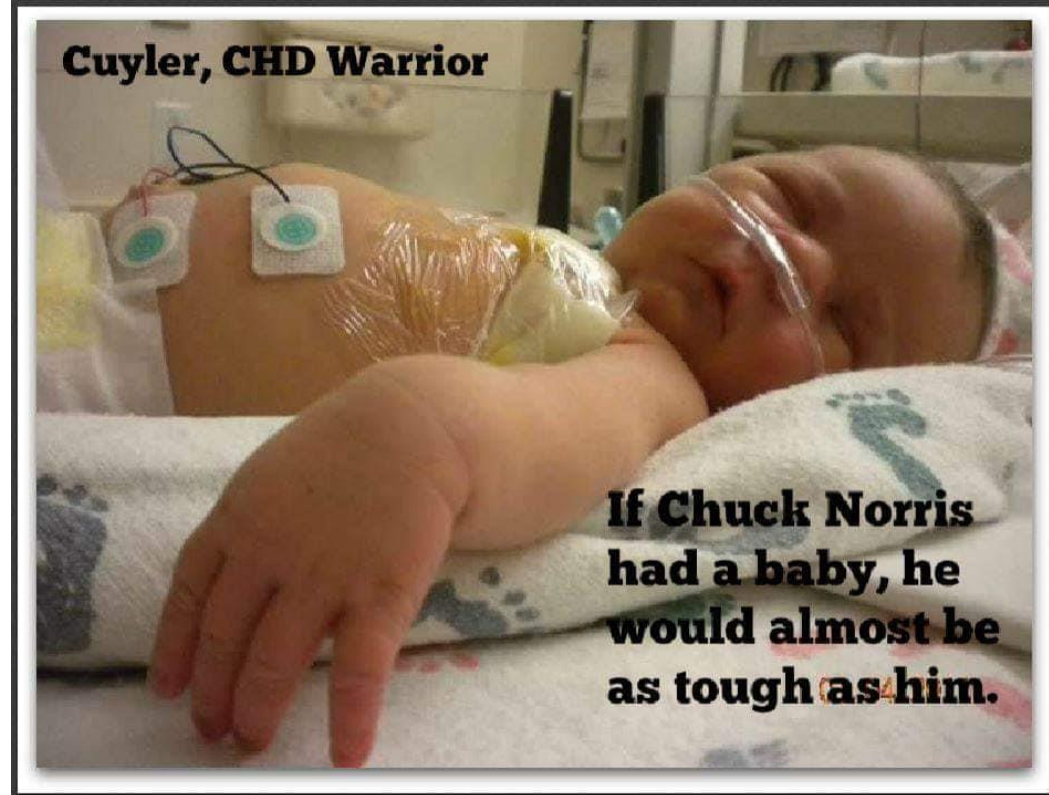
# Diagnosis at in the NICU

Tetralogy of Fallot

-was going to need surgery

-feelings of guilt, anger, sadness

I felt robbed of a “typical” birth.



# I am a heart mom... now what?

I found Mended Little Hearts through my oversharing, dental hygienist sister while cleaning a patient's teeth and talking about Cuyler and his diagnosis.

She told me about the group, who to contact, and where to go online.

This was huge for three reasons:

1. I am not alone, even though some days I still feel it.
2. There are people who can truly understand what I am going through.
3. No matter what, we were going to be okay.

# Cuyler and his wild ride

Two Open Heart Surgeries - 4 months old and 8 years old, both on April 29th in 2011 and 2019.

Many hours of cardiology and pediatrician appointments, EKG and Echo testing, ER trips, halter monitors, and worry.



# How I have managed the last 10 years... or tried to:

- Support found through MLH
- Talking to EVERYONE
- Raising awareness
- Volunteering - local and national level
- Providing support to other



And it ebbs and flows - some days I help others and other days I need help to get myself up off the floor. The never ending cycle of normal, new information, adjustment, and new normal until it feels normal again.

Everyone can decide what level of support is needed for themselves, how much to share, and if desired - how to pay it forward.

# Mended Little Hearts

- Started in 2004, following Mended Hearts developed in 1951
- Over 300 local Chapters/Groups, partnered with 460 hospitals and rehab centers
- Ways to connect:
  - Membership - free!
  - Local Mended Little Hearts Groups
  - Parent Matching
  - Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)



# CHD Awareness

Most people are unaware that Congenital Heart Defects are the MOST common birth defect in the United States, affecting approximately every 1 in 110.

February is Heart Month/Week

- Share Facts
- Rock Your Scar
- CHD Awareness Events at the local level
- Proclamations by local and state governments

# Support offered through:

- Membership: <https://mendedhearts.org/join-us-today/>
  - Provided through Peer-to-Peer Support (in person or virtual), Bravery Bags, ER packs, Cath Lab bags, Pantry Drop Offs, Angel Boxes, Community Events and Meetings
- Connect with other families and friends:
  - <https://mendedhearts.org/request-support/>
- Mended Little Hearts Guide:
  - <https://mendedhearts.org/heartguide/>
- National Support: Power of Pictures, HeartBeat Magazine, Rock Your Scar, MLH Blog: <https://mendedhearts.org/category/mended-little-hearts-blog/>