



ALY'S STORY

My Mom says that "God made me special" that God sent me to bring out the good in others. She told me that when I was born, my body had a road block in it called a "blood clot." The way to think of a blood clot is like when you're running down a hallway and there's a door at the end that's closed. You can keep running until you run into that door and then you just bounce backwards and can't go anywhere because the door is closed. She says that's how my blood runs through my body. When I was two, my body couldn't handle the "closed door" anymore and so my blood started leaking out other little paths that were weaker.

After lots of phone calls and meetings and taking lots and lots of pictures of my body, my Doctors decided to try and make a new path for my blood to run through. Sadly, that door shut too. Because my Doctor cared for me so much, he had my Mom and Dad take me to Nebraska and Cincinnati to see if there were any other ways to fix my body and help my blood go around the blood clot. Going to both of those hospitals was sort of fun, but kind of scary too.

Since my body was leaking blood slowly all the time, I had to start going to SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center to get blood transfusions. My Mom says blood transfusions are like filling up your tank when you are out of gas. You have to go back and fill up or else you run out and your car won't go. My Mom says the reason I can get a refill, or blood transfusion, is because God made nice people who care about others. Those people go to a place and donate their blood for people like me. I wish I could tell all those people who care about me "Thank you." My Mom and I started telling other people how important it is for them to donate blood whenever they can. We tell them that it really doesn't hurt and that if you are scared of needles close your eyes. I think needles are scary, but my Mom says it's really no big deal. She has given blood at each of the blood drives my school has. My Mom says that it takes lots of people to donate blood over and over to care for kids like me. So far it has taken nearly 400 transfusions just for me to keep going.

I know it seems scary to give blood and maybe you are really busy. Maybe you think there are lots of people who already do it so you don't have to. My Mom says there's never enough, because there are a lot of kids out there like me who need people to donate blood so they get a chance to be grown-ups, too. My Mom says she wishes she knew how to get everyone to give blood, so she'll keep telling people one at a time. I say, right now, I'm asking you.