



Sophie Schneblin
Peoria, IL
Arthritis Walk Honoree

Sophie is a bright and enthusiastic nine year old who was diagnosed with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis (JRA) at the age of six. The summer before starting kindergarten, Sophie began to experience pain in her knees. Her parents thought she was just experiencing growing pains, but by October of that same year it was clear that something else was going on. Sophie found herself unable to walk and her doctor thought perhaps her leg was broken. The x-rays proved that theory wrong, and Sophie was scheduled to see an orthopedic surgeon. His prognosis was that Sophie was fine! Well she, and her parents knew that was not the case. She was then taken to a neurologist who performed a multitude of tests, which Sophie found very frightening.

After so many tests, Sophie had become a regular in the radiology department, and the staff was always very nice. This helped to calm Sophie's fears, but the pain in her leg continued and she had trouble walking, and could hardly run at all. According to Sophie, "I felt yucky and didn't want to go to school." Sophie loved school and her parents knew something had to be done.

Running out of options Sophie's parents finally took her to Dr. Klein-Gittelman at Children's Hospital in Chicago. Sophie felt very comfortable with the doctor, whom she stated, "always listened to me." After more tests, the diagnosis of JRA was given. Sophie was prescribed the proper medication to deal with her condition, and once she got into a routine she began to feel so much better.

After being fitted for special inserts for her shoes, Sophie was able to walk better. The pain and extreme tiredness had disappeared, and Sophie was once again a happy, playful and energetic child. She loves jumping rope, riding her bike, dancing, writing poetry and taking piano lessons. This past summer she participated in synchronized swimming and had the time of her life. Sophie loves being in the kitchen and is quite the little baker. She has decided to turn her talents into a career as a professional baker when she grows up.

Sophie is a fighter and wants to help other kids get through their challenges with JRA. She doesn't want them to be scared or suffer from the pain. It is because of her bravery and courage that the Arthritis Foundation is proud to have Sophie as the 2012 Arthritis Walk Honoree.

About the Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation (www.arthritis.org) is committed to raising awareness and reducing the unacceptable impact of arthritis, which strikes one in every five adults and 300,000 children, and is the nation's leading cause of disability. To conquer this painful, debilitating disease, we support education, research, advocacy and other vital programs and services.