

# Easter Seals Help Dawn To Recover

Being chosen 1974 Easter Seal Child for Lancaster County is somewhat akin to being named beauty queen for four-year-old Dawn Marie Boley of New Holland. Dawn, a blue-eyed lass who is well versed on the use of "cheese" when having her picture taken, has already been the target of several pre-campaign publicity cameras for this year's annual Easter Seal fund raising drive, scheduled to begin this week.

But Dawn is taking it in stride, as she does her leg braces and the strenuous exercises that have become a part of her daily regimen. You see, Dawn suffers from Cerebral Palsy. She has never known what it is like to walk and run with ease. But, that doesn't stop Dawn, "She's got a touch of bullheadedness in her," explained her mother, "if an exercise is particularly difficult, she just gets mad and tries even harder."

Dawn's first struggle began at birth. Born three months prematurely, she fought for life weighing less than 2½ pounds. For six weeks, her home was a glass incubator where thin metal probes and constant care protected her fragile body functions. At best, doctors gave her a fifty-fifty chance for survival.

Then her condition stabilized and, at two months of age, she was allowed to leave the hospital for the first time and live with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Donald R. Boley. At home Dawn thrived and her parents thought their worries were over. It wasn't until she was two-years-old that they began to notice something was wrong. Try as she might, little Dawn just could not get her legs to walk right. It was as though somebody was pulling her heels up, so that only her toes would touch the floor.

Doctors diagnosed her problem as muscle spasticity in her legs caused by complications attributed to her premature birth. In March, 1974, she was referred to the Lancaster Easter Seal Rehabilitation Center by her family doctor and a pediatrician. A period of extensive evaluation tests by the Easter Seal therapy staff followed by conformation by a physician specialist and little Dawn was prescribed short leg braces and a program of therapy to be carried out by the Easter Seal staff team.

In September of that year (at the age of 2½) she was enrolled in the Easter Seal preschool developmental kindergarten. Here Lancaster County children are taught to



Dawn Marie Boley of New Holland, the 1974 Easter Seal Child for Lancaster County, poses with a "friend" at the Lancaster Easter Seal Rehabilitation Center, where she is enrolled in the preschool developmental program.

cope with their disabilities so that they can lead as normal, active lives as possible.

For Dawn, the light at the end of the tunnel is near. Her therapy will have to continue, but her legs are responding and next year she is looking forward to attending a regular school kindergarten. For Dawn help was available, and someday the braces that she has grown up with will only be a fading memory.

For Dawn, Easter Seals made a difference.

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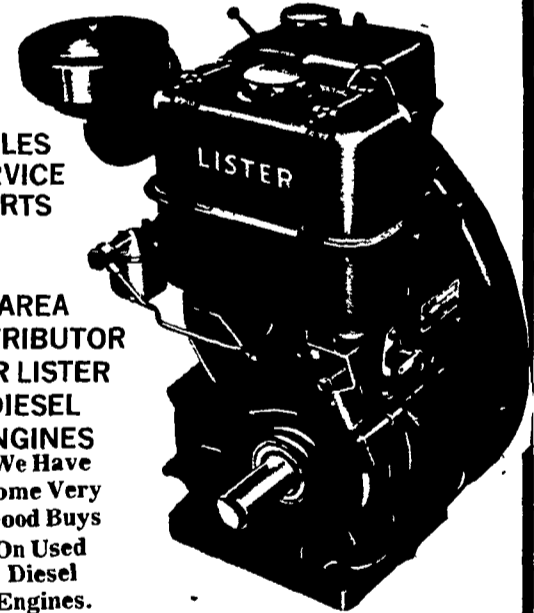
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