

A nurturing home for both mother and child, offering love, accountability and support along their journey.

AUGUST 2023

# JOURNEY HOME UPDATE



## A glimpse of how things work at Journey Home.



There are four things on earth that are unusually wise:

Ants - they aren't strong, but they store up food all summer. Proverbs 30:24-25 (NLT)

Being organized and preparing for the future is a helpful skill that we teach at Journey Home. Having many people in the home means WE have to stay organized and prepared too!

We begin each Monday by making a list.

Every guest fills out a pre-printed form of the chores, phone calls, appointments, emails/texts and other commitments she needs to accomplish that week.

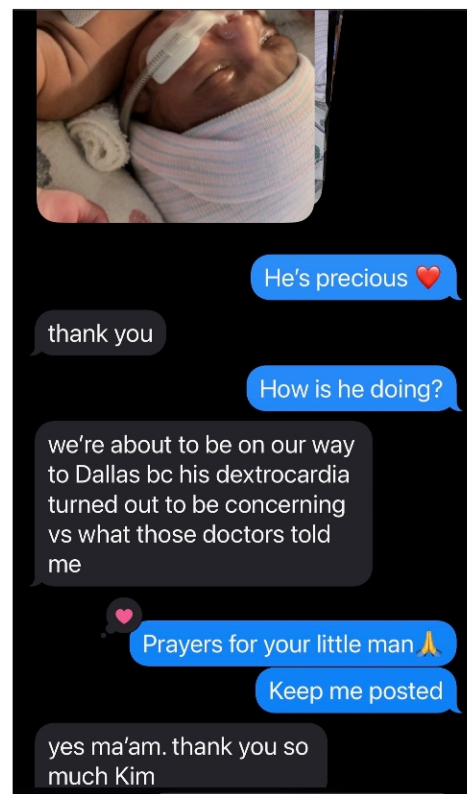
The plan is submitted to her mentor and staff who are available to provide resources, a listening ear and accountability.

A board that lists chores is in the kitchen. Everyone has a magnet with their initials on it beside the chores for that week.

Each guest is given an evening meal to plan. She must shop for it, prepare it, and then clean up afterwards. Guests are encouraged to begin with what food we already have available in order to keep costs low and within budget.

At night, they also learn to be organized by making lunches ahead and putting dinner in a crockpot or at least getting meat thawed and veggies chopped. Part of the routine at night is also teaching their children the importance of organization with choosing clothes for tomorrow, baths, story time, and then bed.

DO YOU EVER WONDER what is going on with some of our former guests after they leave Journey Home? We do too! We stay in touch with many of our guests. One of our guests who had her baby in February asks for prayers. We begin her story with a text.



Are we all perfectly organized? Noooo! But we learn from the consequences and we try again the next day.



Dinner						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
V	JS	V	DS	HB	CR	LO
Guest Jobs						
LS	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes
DJ	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes
CR	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes
HB	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes	WASH Dishes

Thank you for supporting the life-saving work of Journey Home at: [www.givejhtx.org](http://www.givejhtx.org)

For more of her story, continue to page 2.



## Baby EJ's story

Prior to EJ's birth all I knew about him was that he had dextrocardia, which is a fancy scientific term for his heart being on the right side of his body. Little did I know there was a long road ahead of us after his birth. My doctors and prenatal team told me he was a perfect healthy baby. When EJ was born we noticed something out of the ordinary. On top of the dextrocardia he also was only born with one lung (right lung agenesis). His right lung was completely missing but luckily the left lung was perfectly healthy. We also noticed his ears were closed off from the outside rendering him completely absent of hearing on both sides. He had open heart surgery at 21 days old due to his aortic valve being closed off which wouldn't allow blood to pump to the rest of his body. It's called coarctation of the aorta.



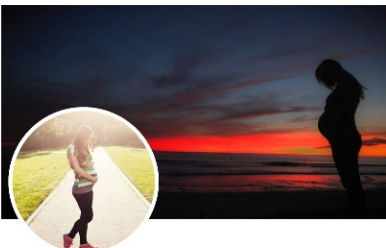
BORN FEBRUARY 7, 2023

He came out of surgery fine and was extubated 4 days later. He started having trouble breathing due to an airway deformation called airway stenosis and his primary cardiologist doctor made an executive decision to intubate again. He was intubated for 9 weeks after. In those nine weeks he made it hard for anyone to believe he would make it but he kept fighting. In one of those instances his intubation tube was kinked and I was faced with a life or death decision for my baby. That was notably the hardest decision in my life but I chose to keep fighting for him against all odds. EJ has come a very long way and even though he's still fragile, I plan to make his life easy as possible while he's still here.

EJ has had DNA and genetic testing done and according to all the tests he is not in any category for any known syndrome. He's a regular baby according to his anatomical make-up. I know better. They call it "Everett's syndrome"....He's 1 in a billion and I'm beyond blessed to be his mama. God hand-picked him for me because he knew what I needed. EJ has since been successfully extubated and taken off all oxygen supply. He's now breathing room air and we pray it stays that way. EJ continues to grow every day. He is now 5 months old and weighing 16 pounds. EJ is also deaf/hard of hearing so I'm taking ASL classes and getting him the proper care so we will be able to communicate. EJ is also very charismatic but also has a big attitude for such a little guy. My heart is so full and warm and I am so lucky to have him. This is unconditional love and I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world and thank you abundantly for all the prayers and support. We did it all with y'all from a distance, standing at our side.

We thank you again with all the love in our hearts.

**Please pray for baby EJ.** Since receiving this letter, baby EJ has had a brief setback recovering from a virus. He and his mama will be staying near the hospital for several weeks while she practices caring for him on her own before they leave for home. For updates on baby EJ, you can follow Journey Home on Facebook.



Journey Home Tx.

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