



We now have ten kids in Ghana undergoing spine surgery by Dr. Boachie's FOCOS team. We are not fully funded, and greatly appreciate contributions - from small gifts to full sponsorships of \$18,000 per child. Detailed information is available on each patient.

Tax-deductible donations to JDC's spine project can be made via www.Rickhodes.org

Contact us at: EthiopianSpines@gmail.com

Thank you! Rick Hodes, MD and the JDC-Ethiopia spine team



Sofonyas



Absira



Hana S.



Hana B.



Biftu

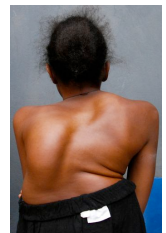
Safonyas, a 9 year old boy from in Addis Ababa, lives with his parents and 2 sibs in a mud-walled home. He is a bright 3rd grade student and ranks highly among his classmates. He wants to be an engineer when he grows up, following in the footsteps of his father, a mechanic. Safonyas has significant scoliosis with his back progressively deforming. Classmates tease him frequently, deeply upsetting his parents. A neighbor who had successfully undergone spinal surgery brought him to us. His spine is shaped like a question mark, and he has lost 25% lung capacity.

Absira is a 15 year old living with his aunt in Semit and attends 7th grade at Safari Academy. As a child he underwent open-heart surgery in Israel for a congenital defect. He sees his mother (a teacher) weekly and his father (a shoe shiner) monthly. He hopes to be a chemist. When he's not titrating or balancing equations, Absira plays soccer with his best friend, Eyob. He came to Dr. Rick two months ago after his cousin returned from successful spine surgery in Ghana. He has moderate scoliosis, and has lost over 1/3 of his lung capacity.

Hana S lives with her mother in Addis Ababa; she has no contact with her father. Age 9, she ranks is at the top of her 2nd grade class. Hana lives in a mud-hut and walks 5 minutes to use a communal toilet. Her best friend, Tigist, has supported her throughout her ordeal: Hana has been ill since she was eight months old. One day, walking through the streets of Addis, one of our post-op spine patients noted her back and immediately suggested that she come to our clinic. She has a spine with a broad arch which is progressively deforming her chest as well.

Hana B is a 15-year-old girl, from Ambo, now living in Addis Ababa. Her mother died when she was 2, and she sees her father, a rural farmer, once a year. Hana lives with her aunt in a mud-hut, sharing a communal toilet with neighbors. Hana is a dedicated student: she walks 1 hour to attend 7th grade. In free time, she enjoys listening to church music and reading. Her spine has been deforming for years; she is teased in and out of school, often being called "gobata," - hunchback. Hana takes solace in her favorite holiday, the Ethiopian New Year. She prays that with each new year her back will improve. Hana has a broad scoliosis curve and has lost 1/3 lung capacity.

Biftu is an 8-year-old girl from Addis Ababa who lives with her parents and 2 sibs. Her father, a college graduate is an education outreach representative in rural Ethiopia. Her mother worked as a kindergarten teacher. They live in a rented house with electricity and water. Biftu is in 1st grade and loves school. She had "growing rods" inserted for juvenile scoliosis 3 years ago and was required to discontinue her education to have time to recover. She needs periodic adjustments of her rods. She aspires to be a scientist. We encourage her, saying that there is a great shortage of Moslem female scientists.



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Tamrat



Betelehem



Yared



Kalkidan



Cherinet

Tamrat is a 16 year old boy whose father died two years ago. He lives with his mom in a mud hut in Addis Ababa, 10 minutes from a communal toilet. He walks 90 minutes to school. His favorite subject is math, and hopes to be a businessman who can change the lives of his family and have a nationwide impact in Ethiopia. In his free time, Tamrat studies after school and listens to music, especially Michael Jackson. His back has been deforming for 9 years and he feels left out during soccer and other sports. He has a marked, symmetrical curve in mid-spine, and has lost 65% lung capacity.

Betelehem is a 17 year old girl from in Addis Ababa. She has always lived with her aunt; her mother died of typhoid and she does not know her father. Betelehem is in the 12th grade and was held back this year due to her sickness. Betelehem's favorite subject is biology, and she wants to be a doctor to help kids like herself. Dr. Rick is her inspiration. She loves listening to popular Ethiopian music. Her back has been deforming for 3 years. She feels isolated from other kids, which pains her aunt. She has significant scoliosis, and has lost nearly half of her lung capacity.

Yared is 8 years old, without sibs, and lives with his parents in a mud hut in Addis Ababa. Yared's mother is a housemaid, and his father worked as a taxi driver until an accident left him disabled. Yared's mother is now the sole provider, and they have struggled financially for the 3 years that Yared has been suffering. He is in the first grade at the Ethiopia Ermiga School and loves math. He wants to be a doctor, like Dr. Rick. Yared, who has both kyphosis (bending downward) and scoliosis (curvature), hopes that his classmates will stop making fun of his back when he returns from his surgery.

Kalkidan was born in Gojjam but is temporarily living with an uncle in Addis Ababa while getting medical care. A bright 8 year old, she ranked first in her class last year. She completed 1st grade but did not return to school for a second year because classmates ruthlessly made fun of her back. She enjoys reading, traditional music, and dancing. Her favorite holiday is Easter because she loves spending time with relatives. Kalkidan wants nothing more than to return to school, free of her sickness. She has significant scoliosis.

Cherinet is bright a boy from Gambela, in the deep south Ethiopia. He traveled for days with his family to seek help from Dr. Rick. At home, he walks 45 minutes to school, and ranks 3rd out of 90 in his 3rd grade class. He enjoys math, and wants to be a doctor. His father is a driver, and his mom is a messenger. Cherinet is an only child and lives with his parents in their mud hut. They walk 5 minutes to use a communal toilet. He has significant scoliosis, and has already lost 61% of his lung function. His spine has hurt him since he was three years old, and he is looking forward to his surgery.



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