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## **FAMILY'S WHEELCHAIR VAN TOTALED BY APRIL FLASH FLOOD**

### **Single Mom of 4 Needs Help to Get Back on the Road Safely**

**PARSONS, Kan.**—On April 26, Melianie Babb and her 4 young children were forced to evacuate their home in their wheelchair accessible van due to tornado warnings. In the process, they hit a flash flood. While the family escaped safely, their van was totaled in the flood, and insurance won't cover the total cost of an accessible van.

They've started fundraising with the trusted national nonprofit Help Hope Live at:  
<https://helphopelive.org/campaign/27549/>

Melianie Babb is used to rolling with the punches as she raises 4 unique children as a single mom, aged 13, 11, 9, and 3. Her 3-year-old is medically complex: Kaylee Angelica Babb was born by emergency C-section and spent 158 days in the hospital before she could come home. She is living with partial trisomy 2Q, a rare genetic disorder that leads to deafness, vision issues, a feeding tube, and surgeries.

"Kaylee has the biggest smile and is a happy child," explained Melianie. "She is learning to use sign language to communicate. She can say MAMA."

Melianie has been raising her children alone since her husband walked out while Kaylee was just 8 months old. On April 26, their strength was put to the test:

"We evacuated, but the tornado sirens had stopped after a few hours," explained Melianie. "Worrying about getting Kaylee's care and medication done, and getting the kids to school the next morning, we decided to head home. As we were getting closer to Southern Avenue, the water on the road began to rise quickly. By 13<sup>th</sup> and Southern, the wheelchair van had stalled and was taking on water."

By the time they exited the vehicle and crossed Southern Avenue, the water was waist-deep for Melianie's 9-year-old son.

The van was towed to a local shop the following morning along with more than 10 other vehicles impacted the same way. The engine was flooded, and the insurance company deemed the van a total loss.

The wheelchair van was a particular loss for the family because it was purchased by Melanie's father, Lester Patterson, using savings from he and his wife's retirement.

Unfortunately, insurance will only assist with the cost of a standard minivan—not the wheelchair accessible minivan that Kaylee and her family relies on.

"That van was a medical asset for our family," Melanie explained. As well as allowing community access for the family, "it allowed us to take Kaylee to medical specialists and therapies, both in Kansas City and locally, multiple times per month."

Living on disability herself with 2 children with disabilities, Melanie knew that working with GoFundMe could jeopardize her family's eligibility for asset-based assistance. That's why she turned instead to the trusted nonprofit Help Hope Live.

Unlike a GoFundMe campaign, with Help Hope Live, all funds raised are administered by the nonprofit to directly pay verified medical expenses and related costs only. Help Hope Live also verifies medical and financial need for every patient.

Donations are tax deductible in Kaylee's honor at:

<https://helphopelive.org/campaign/27549/>

Help Hope Live is a national nonprofit that specializes in engaging communities in secure, tax-deductible fundraising campaigns for people who need a transplant or are affected by a catastrophic injury or illness. Since 1983, campaigns organized by Help Hope Live have raised over \$194 million to pay patient expenses, assisting more than 25,000 patient families. ###