



# GRATITUDE

... is key to happiness.™



Photos courtesy of Republican Herald.



## TINY BOY BIG ON GRATITUDE

### IMAGINE

...being barely taller than a baseball bat, standing only twenty-seven inches tall and weighing a slight fifteen pounds. A helmet wobbles on your tiny head, but you grip the bat and a look of sheer determination comes over your little face. The pitcher throws a pitch. You swing, hit the ball and head off toward first base, hobbling your way toward your dream.

This is the lifestory of Josiah Viera. When Josiah was born, the doctors performed all the standard tests for newborns and declared him to be a healthy boy. But by the time he was six months old, it was clear that something was very wrong. Josiah wasn't gaining weight or growing like he should have been. He spent most of the first year of life in the hospital while doctors tried to figure out what was wrong with him. On his first birthday, his mom listened as the doctors told her they believed he had a disease called Progeria. Progeria is a very rare condition, affecting only one out of every four million people. Children with Progeria age ten years for every one, making their bodies much older on the inside than they are on the outside.

Josiah has spent much of his short life in pain and in the hospital, but that didn't stop him from dreaming big dreams. To play baseball on a team, he said, was the one thing he wanted to do more than anything else. So Josiah flexed his behavior muscles and fought for his dream.

The local Little League coach met with Josiah to see for himself if the boy could play ball. He'd heard about this six-year-old boy who stands only twenty-seven inches tall and only weighs fifteen pounds. Josiah walked right up to him and said, "Coach, can I play?" The coach couldn't say no, and so in the spring, Josiah suited up for his first Little League baseball game. His mom worried that his teammates would make fun

of him, but they accepted him as if he'd always been part of the team. At the end of Josiah's first game, his coach found him sitting on the bench, tears rolling down his cheeks. "I just don't want it to be over," Josiah sniffled.

Everyone who has watched Josiah swing at the ball has been amazed at the attitude of this tiny player. He still spends lots of his days fighting sickness in the hospital and in nearly constant pain in his legs and arms. Josiah strengthens his behavior muscles by just being thankful for the chance to play. He has become a hero to the thousands of people who come to watch him play. "I think that's what really touches people, you know," says his grandma, "that even though he's sick, he gives it his all." Josiah Viera may be the smallest Little League player ever, but his gratitude shows his big behavior muscles. Just like Josiah, you can have an attitude of gratitude and give your all to overcome pain and struggles and become a hero in your lifestory.

Visit [Mind-Cue.com](http://Mind-Cue.com) for free resources and enjoy more inspiring lifestories, videos and more to become a hero in your lifestory.

### QUESTIONS LEAD TO UNDERSTANDING

1. What evidence is there that Josiah exhibited gratitude? What shows that it has positively affected his life and others?
2. How has gratitude helped Josiah to deal with his pain and illness? Why do you think gratitude can make people happier?
3. How can you learn from Josiah's lifestory and benefit from being grateful? What specific actions can you take to be more thankful and happier?