



# fondation en cœur

## Catherine's Story

“It is with great happiness and gratitude that I join the En Cœur Foundation as ambassador. Two and a half years ago, I gave birth to my daughter, Marguerite, born at 1.4 kilos with severe intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR). She stayed a month and a half in neonatology at Sainte-Justine, where a few days after her premature birth, she was diagnosed with a heart defect. Her ductus arteriosus had not closed at birth, which led to her first surgery at the age of 3 months. Then, the multiple holes in her heart (ASD and VSD), which caused her to have high pulmonary arterial pressure, were closed during an open-heart surgery when she was 6 months old.

During the first 9 months of life of my little fighter, she was force-fed since drinking milk was too demanding because of her heart failure. Through this storm, we were lucky to be accompanied by caring people, be it the neonatology team, the cardiology team, the clinique d'investigation neuro-cardiaque (CINC), the social worker of the CHU Sainte-Justine, and in addition, the En Cœur Foundation. Being at your baby's bedside is physically, emotionally, psychologically, monetarily painful. We were able to count on the support of the En Cœur Foundation for our accommodation, parking and meal costs. Staying 24 hours a day in the hospital for weeks has its share of stress and this support has been invaluable to us.

When Marguerite was 15 months old, I gave birth to her little brother, Antoine, at 22 weeks. This baby is now a shining star who lives deep within us. My two children made me evolve and I firmly believe that supporting sick children and their families is essential. Becoming a parent is not always a synonym of normality, ease, sweetness. Some parents need support and organizations like the En Cœur Foundation are there to help us breathe a little through the storms.

It's my turn to do my part for this Foundation. As ambassador, I will ensure that the cause of children with heart disease is heard, raise awareness among those around me about the Foundation's mission and participate in fundraising so that the families who go through what I have been through can also get support.



This is the least we can do for all these sick children who pass on to us their great resilience and impressive strength.”

With all my heart,  
Catherine Paquin, florist @floradaugustine  
Mother of Marguerite and angel baby Antoine