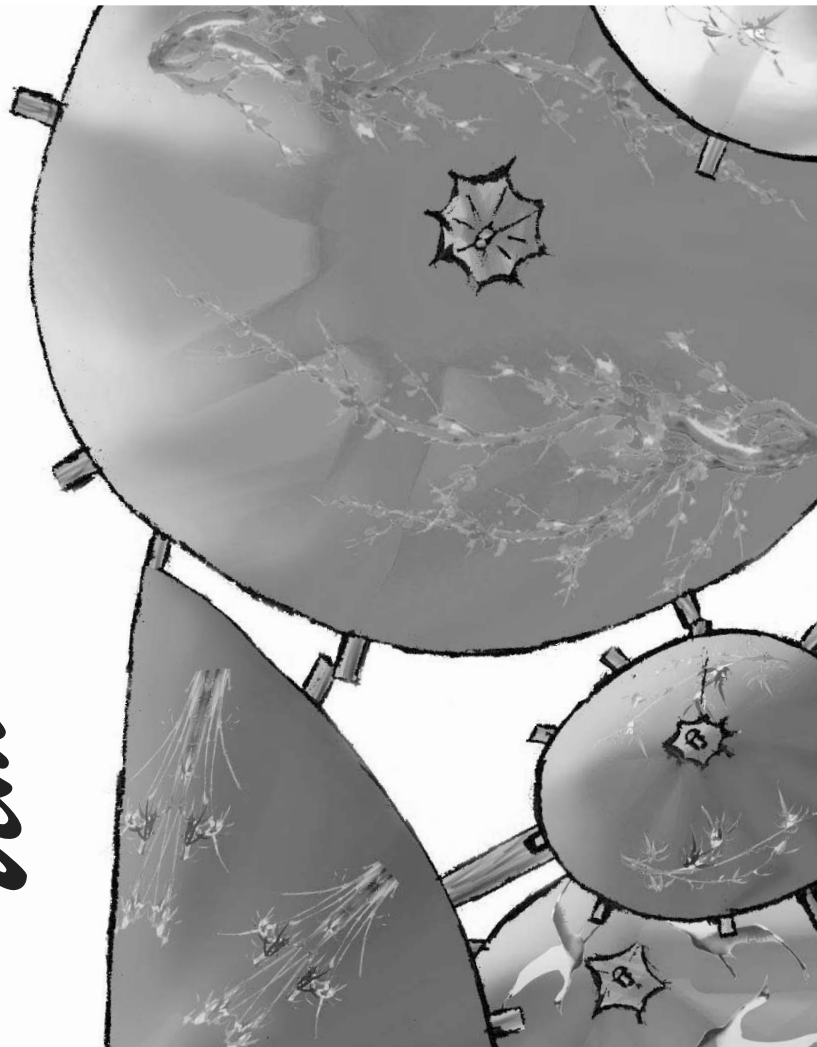


Leprosy Mission Canada *Umbrella Girl*



The Umbrella Girl ❀❀❀





There is a street in the small town of Chiang Mai, Thailand covered with bursts of red, blue, yellow and green. Everywhere you look there are more colours! It's called the Umbrella Street. There are hundreds of umbrellas all over people's lawns, on their doorsteps and in their gardens. This magical place is where Mali, an eight-year-old girl, lives with her mom, dad, two brothers and three sisters.

The whole family makes umbrellas. Every spare moment – before school, after school and all day on the weekends – is spent making beautiful umbrellas.





Each member of the family has a special job. First, Mali's dad and her brother build a strong wooden frame including a long handle and several spokes sticking out the top; just like a bicycle wheel. Then, Mali's mom and her sister stretch a fancy material called silk across the frame and tie it to the spokes with string. In the next step, Mali's oldest brother and sister paint beautiful flowers and other shapes on the silk. Mali's job comes next. She gets to finish the umbrella by attaching tassels of silk to each point on the umbrella. When the wind blows, the tassels sway back and forth – just like they are dancing!



Mali's Family



*M*ali is good at her job. She is very fast and many times people stop to watch her work. Mali is proud of what she can do – each umbrella makes her happy.

But one day, something very strange happened to Mali.

The paint on some of the newly made umbrellas was dry. She reached for a tassel and began to tie it on – just like she always did. But her fingers wouldn't work properly! She kept dropping the tassels and couldn't tie the knots as she had done before.



Then she noticed some red spots on her arms. Dropping everything, she ran to show her mother. Not knowing the cause of these patches, her mother suggested Mali get some sleep and they would keep an eye on the spots.

After another couple months, Mali noticed the patches had spread up her arms and on her legs! She was so scared! She ran to tell her mother who took her to see the doctor right away.



The doctor played a game with Mali. She had to close her eyes tight and the doctor touched her arms and legs in different spots with a cotton ball. Each time she felt the cotton ball, she had to tell him where it was. Mali liked playing the game, but the doctor didn't need long to understand what was wrong with Mali.



The doctor was very nice. He told Mali about leprosy. He told her that she would get better, but she would have to follow his instructions very carefully. The very first thought Mali had was needles! She hated needles! But the doctor told her all she had to do was take some medicine every day called Multi-Drug Therapy. These pills would get rid of the leprosy and make Mali feel much better.

Mali had leprosy.





The doctor said Mali would have to stay with a bunch of other kids her age at a hospital where the doctors and nurses all knew a lot about leprosy. After giving her mother a big hug and kiss good-bye, she left with a nurse named Nutiga.

Nutiga introduced her to lots of other kids who also had leprosy. She also told Mali about the school at the hospital. Mali was surprised she still had to go to school, even though she was sick. Nutiga reminded her that she would miss too many days of school if she waited until she was better before returning.

Mali liked it at the hospital. She made many new friends and the nurses and doctors were all very kind. Mali was careful to exercise her hands every day to keep them strong. The nurses were there whenever she needed extra help.

For many weeks, Mali stayed at the hospital. She felt much better, but missed her family a lot.

One day, a doctor came to Mali and told her about Jesus. He told her how Jesus loved her – no matter what happened. Then the doctor gave Mali the best news yet – she could go home in a week!

“But,” he said, “you must continue to take your medicine everyday for one year – just like at the hospital. Or the leprosy will come back and it will be much more difficult to cure.”

She couldn’t keep her mind on her schoolwork or her exercises. “Lift your wrist... I’m going home! Straighten your fingers... I’m going home!” It was all she could think about.

When the day finally came, all her new friends gathered around and Nutiga told Mali how much they would miss her. Then they gave her a present. A box wrapped in pretty red paper and tied with a big, beautiful orange bow.

As Mali ripped off the paper, she found a Bible inside! Now she could read about Jesus whenever she needed His help!

Just then, she turned around and saw her mother walking into the hospital. Mali couldn’t hold back her excitement. She ran and jumped into her mother’s open arms! How she had missed her mom all this time. Mali had never been away from home this long before. Being held by her mother made her feel safe and happy again. She didn’t worry about leprosy at all anymore.



Mali was so excited!

*W*hen she returned home, Mali told her brothers and sisters all about the hospital and her new friends. She knew how much she would miss them. But she was so happy to be back at home on the Umbrella Street.

The very next day, right after school, Mali picked up a brightly coloured umbrella. Then she picked up a silky, gold tassel. After one or two tries, Mali's fingers worked just as fast as they always did!

The End!



Umbrella Girl Activities



Activity (Ages 9-12)

Do You See What I See?

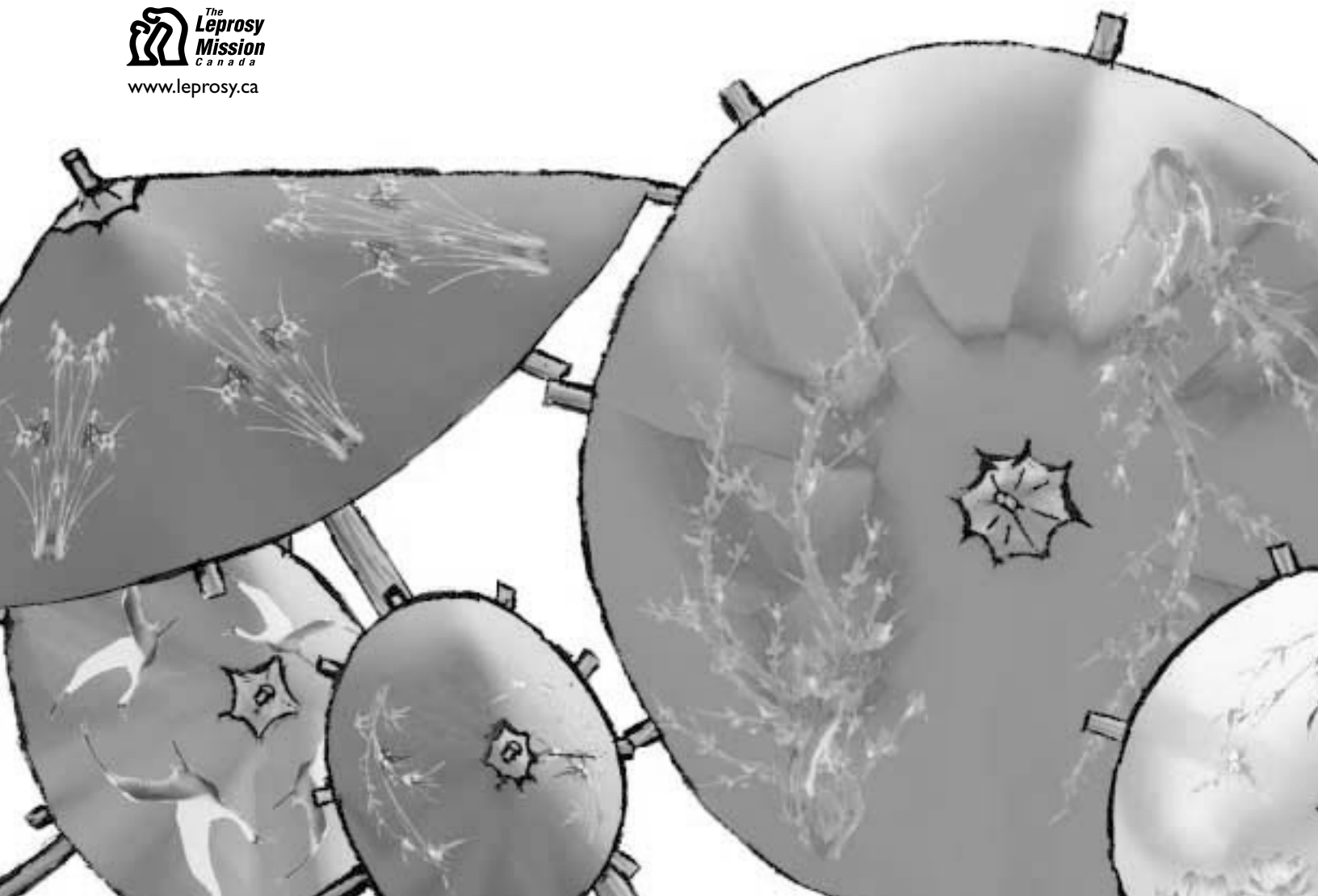
Have each child put on a pair of dark sunglasses in a dimly lit area of the room. See how well they can read the following passage from the Umbrella Girl Story:

She couldn't keep her mind on her schoolwork or her exercises. "Lift your wrist... I'm going home! Straighten your fingers... I'm going home!" It was all she could think about.

Explain that leprosy affects a person's sight because their eyelids do not protect their eyes the way they should. When the children wear these dark glasses, they will get an idea what it is like when people with leprosy start to lose their sight in stages.



www.leprosy.ca



Teacher's Activity Guide



Activity (Ages 5-7)

It's So Hard to See!

Ask one of the children in the group to put on a pair of dark sun glasses. Give the child a pair of child safe scissors and a piece of paper with a large shape outlined on the page. Ask the child to cut out the shape.

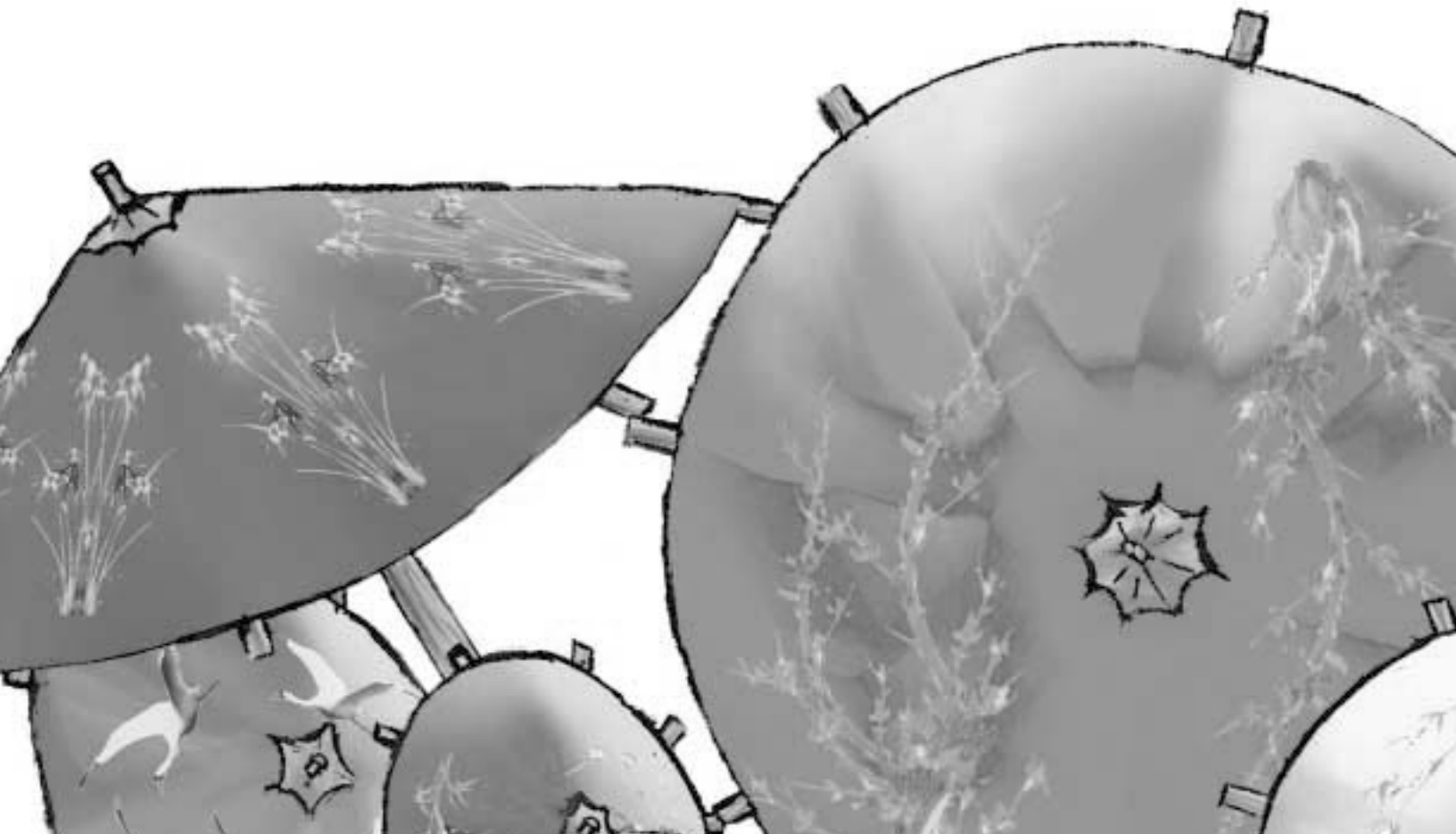
Explain that when someone has leprosy they may go blind. It is very hard to go to school and to do normal chores.

Activity (Ages 7-9)

There's No Place Like Home!

Have the children write out (or tell their teacher) 5 things they would miss if they were away from home at summer camp. Younger children may draw the pictures instead of writing.

Explain that many children who have leprosy are sent away from their families, either to stay at a hospital or because their families are afraid of leprosy.



"Red, blue, yellow and green; the prettiest umbrellas ever seen; We make them big, we make them small, for people short, for people tall; and I put tassels on them all!"

Dear Parent,

A little girl who lives in Thailand wrote the words at the top of the page. She was only 8 years old and she was already a responsible part of the family team – she put the tassels on the umbrellas her family made.

Then one day, she fumbled with the tassels – she couldn't seem to get her fingers to work. At first her mother thought her daughter was just tired, so she asked her to rest. But this little girl's hands grew stiff and resistant – soon she could hardly hold a pencil.

This little 8-year-old girl had leprosy.

When I tell the story of leprosy, I am rarely surprised at the questions I get asked. Most of us believe that leprosy is an age-old disease, long cured. But every 2 minutes, someone is diagnosed with the disease.

Leprosy affects the parts of the body furthest from the heart – the hands, feet and face. Without early detection and treatment, leprosy patients can suffer permanent disabilities and even blindness.

But today, leprosy can be cured!

On average, it only costs about \$350 to cure someone with leprosy. Together, we can help cure and care for 1, 5 or even 10 people with leprosy!

Please use the cardboard box for the money your child collects and follow the instructions on the bottom once your collection box is full.

If you would like more information on leprosy or the Umbrella Girl program, please visit us online at www.leprosy.ca or call 1-888-LEPROSY (537-7679).

Thank you for your encouragement and support. Your child's compassionate giving can bring healing so profound, it is truly life-transforming!

Yours in Gratitude,

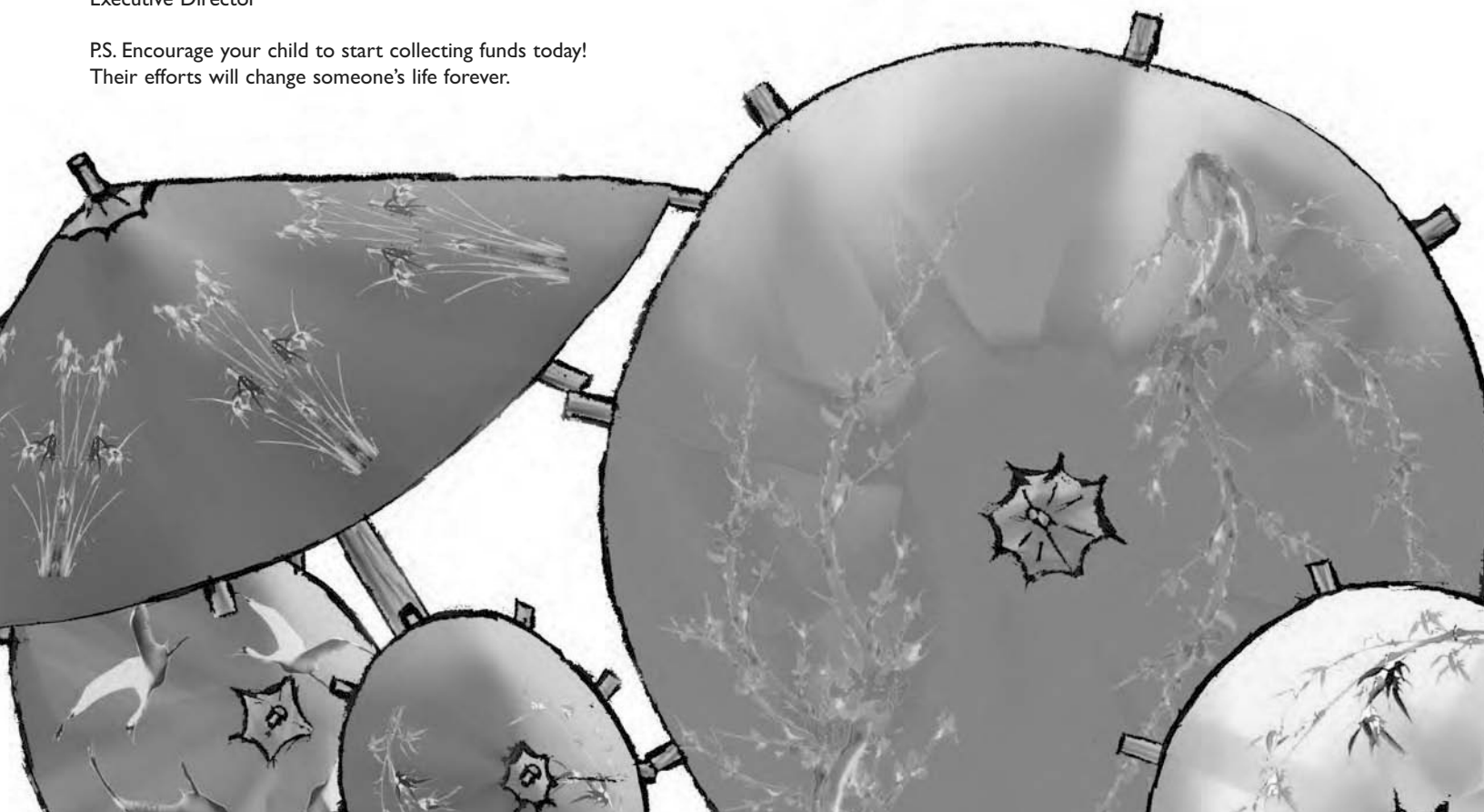


Peter Derrick
Executive Director



**The
Leprosy
Mission**
Canada
www.leprosy.ca

P.S. Encourage your child to start collecting funds today!
Their efforts will change someone's life forever.





Dear Parents,

Thank you for helping your child to raise money for children like the Umbrella Girl. If you are raising money with a group, please follow the instructions given by your group leader. Otherwise, use this form to submit the money your child saves. If you have any questions, please call 1-888-LEPROSY. Thank you.

When you have filled this box up to the top:

- break the box open and count all the money
- write a cheque or purchase a money order for the total amount
- complete this form and send it to The Leprosy Mission Canada at the address below

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Province: _____ Postal Code: _____
Telephone Number: () _____

☐ I would like to continue saving money to cure leprosy patients, please send another collection box.

☐ I have enclosed a ☐ cheque ☐ money order for the amount of \$ _____

☐ Please debit my ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ AMEX for the amount of \$ _____

Card Number: _____

Expiry Date: _____

Signature: _____



75 The Donway West, Suite 1410, North York, ON M3C 2E9
1-888-537-7679 (1-888-LEPROSY) www.leprosy.ca
Donations over \$10 will be issued a tax deductible receipt.



The
Leprosy
Mission
Canada



100 Mural Street, Suite 100
Richmond Hill, ON L4B 1J3

You have helped a child just like me who has leprosy. I was lucky enough to find a doctor early and get the treatment I needed. But sadly, a lot of kids can't get to a doctor, or their parents are too afraid to take them there.

With your help, kids and adults just like me can be cured of leprosy! What an amazing gift you have given us!

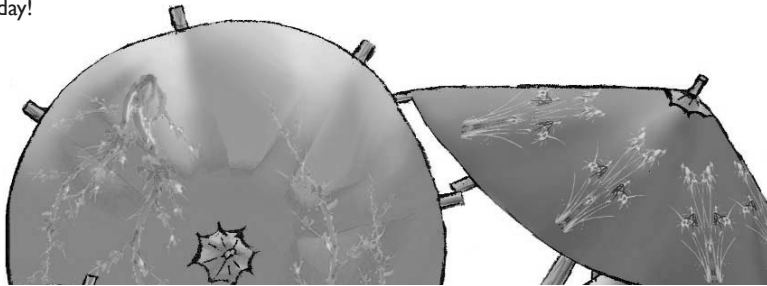
To help even more, tell your friends and family about leprosy. Tell them that they can cure someone too! All they need to do is to go to www.leprosy.ca or call The Leprosy Mission at **1-888-LEPROSY**.

And continue to keep us in your prayers. We all know that God will help to give us strength and make us better.

Don't wait! Tell everyone my story today!

Yours in Thanks,

Mali
The Umbrella Girl



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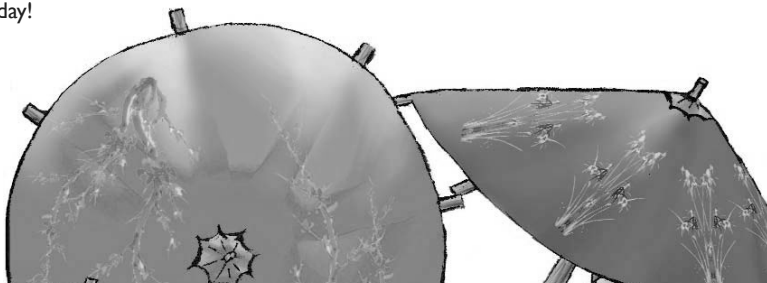
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Thank You!



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