

Josiah "Bubby" Viera

Age 4



Pennsylvania

Geisinger's Janet Weis Children's Hospital
Early Aging Disease

There aren't many kids like Josiah Viera. This 4-year-old has an irresistible grin, his own business cards, a website and a large circle of friends throughout the country. He is also one of only about 40 kids in the world who have been diagnosed with Hutchinson-Gilford Progeria syndrome, a genetic condition often referred to as "early aging disease."

"On the outside he may look healthy," said his mom Jennifer. "But we don't know what's going on inside." That uncertainty is inherent with Progeria. Often children with this illness have strokes or heart attacks at only 5 or 6 years of age.

Progeria also makes treatments for other conditions more difficult, and Josiah has had more complications than most Progeria patients. But he's also reached some amazing milestones thanks to the incredible caregivers at Geisinger's Janet Weis Children's Hospital.

Josiah is a cheerful, friendly little boy who is able to walk, talk and play—all of which are major achievements in his life. He has become a symbol of hope to everyone facing challenges that seem insurmountable.