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Photo by: Save a Child's Heart

Save a Child's Heart organization steps up to the plate

By JUDY SIEGEL
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Israel Embassy in China marks 18th anniversary of diplomatic ties by saving 18 young lives.

An 18-month-old Chinese orphan who has undergone surgery for a serious congenital heart defect at Wolfson Medical Center will have a greater chance of finding parents in Beijing now that he is healthy.

Dr. Sion Houri, head of pediatric intensive care at the Holon hospital and one of the founders, with the late Amiram Cohen, of its Save a Child's Heart (SACH) organization, says the toddler is now "voraciously hungry. He eats everything he sees."

To mark the 18th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Israel, the Israel Embassy in Beijing decided to sponsor life-saving medical treatment for 18 children from all across China.

A little boy named Baoxin Quian, who lives in a Beijing orphanage, was chosen in March to be flown to Israel for surgery at Wolfson by doctors volunteering for SACH. A volunteer from the orphanage accompanied him and has served as his caregiver and interpreter.

SACH doctors realized that his heart defect was even more complicated than they had expected. They found he had a very complicated heart defect in which not only is his heart located on the right side of his chest but that all the blood is pushed to the left atrium of the heart, instead of being divided into vessels connected to the two sides.

In addition, there was a hole in the septum between the two sides. Nevertheless, they decided to operate him, and the boy is now out of intensive care and quickly recovering at Wolfson.

"Baoxin is very sweet and friendly," said Houri, who has been going once a year with colleagues to the Beijing region to find children whose hearts can be repaired. "He was tinted blue when he arrived due to lack of oxygen."

From the minute he arrived at the SACH children's home before his surgery, which took place over two weeks ago, he played with all the other children and showed he felt comfortable.

"Every time we had visitors to the SACH house, Baoxin immediately went to them and started playing, and if there was a man, he immediately placed himself in the man's arms and wouldn't let go," said SACH representative Tamar Shapira.

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