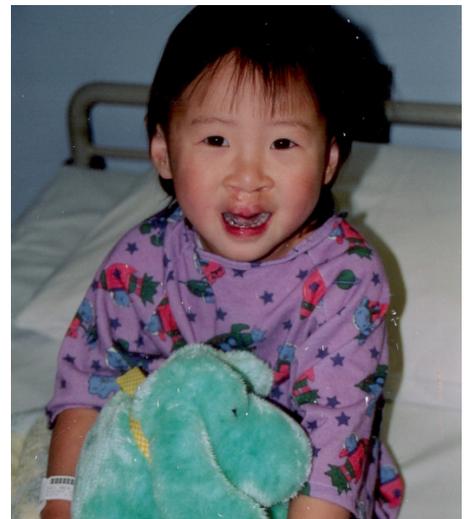


Hi! I'm Anya Igel and you might remember me from the last two years at Longmont Suzuki Strings. I was with Ms. Karla for one year and then I studied with Mrs. Barber for another year. I loved being part of Pennies for Peace and Playing for Pets. I really wish I could be there for your concert for Operation Smile.



I was born in China with a bilateral cleft lip and palate. That means that when I was born my top lip had two very big openings and the roof of my mouth had a big hole in it too. This made it hard to drink milk when I was a baby because the milk ran right out my nose. When you get older it makes it harder to talk clearly because all your air leaks out the hole.

To help with these things cleft kids have to have surgeries to close the holes. Some kids just need one or two surgeries, but some kids, like me, need quite a few. I have had eight surgeries: one in China, four in Denver and my last three have been in Los Angeles, California. My Doctor now is William Magee, Jr and he is very nice. His family is pretty special! My doctor's father, Dr William Magee, Sr is also a surgeon for cleft lip kids and he started Operation Smile. This group goes on mission trips all over the world to do surgeries on cleft lips and palates for free. This is awesome because in a lot of other countries they don't have specially trained surgeons or enough money to pay for surgery and lots of kids would never get any care at all without missionary groups like these.



I'm so excited that you are raising money to help other kids like me!

Thank You.

Anya