

The Pierce Family Fundraiser!

For 6 years, our family has been holding an annual fundraiser called Gaming for Pepper. Pepper is our daughter, and she loves to play board games with her Dad. Our event is a 24-hour board and video game marathon held at our local community clubhouse in Orange, CA. This year, our event will be November 11-12. For an entry fee of \$30, we cover food and supplies and donate the remaining funds to SBA. We also ask friends and family to make donations directly to the organization.

We donate because Pepper was born with what we thought was a “stork bite” birthmark on her lower back. After it didn’t go away, we sought the advice of a friend’s pediatrician who suspected the mark might be a tethered spinal cord. We were referred to a pediatric neurosurgeon who ultimately told us that Pepper’s cord was tethered in 3 different places with 3 different types of tethers – the first child he had ever seen with all three types.



A week later, at 4 months and 10 days old, Pepper underwent surgery, but this was not the end of our journey with Spina Bifida. In 2015, Pepper started having difficulty with incontinence, and we found out she had another tether. She underwent surgery again with another painful recovery. Then in early 2016, Pepper began complaining of chronic back and leg pain. An MRI revealed another tether, and we met with a new team of doctors. Because the possibility of side effects from a third surgery was so great, the team suggested we wait as long as possible for the operation. Now Pepper has to have an annual MRI and bladder study along with regular check-ups and physical therapy. We are fortunate that we can cover her medical expenses.

We give to SBA to support research into the intricacies of Spina Bifida and are happy to lend our story to raise awareness for the cause.