

# Ana's story.

**"There is a special plan for me, who once was an orphan without a name..."**



In May 2011, Kansas City youth Ana Colliton appeared in Christian Youth Theater's (CYT) production of Annie. Not only does she share a close name with the show, but her story is remarkably similar, too.

Ana was born in La Paz, Bolivia, a country second only to Haiti in poverty level. She was placed in an orphanage where extreme malnutrition and a congenital anomaly, make it miraculous she survived. Ana made a connection with her would-be parents (visiting for an unrelated reason), and the parent-child bond was made, never to be broken.

Ana was born without an outer right ear. With only one ear, Ana has trouble hearing in a large or noisy group setting. This can cause sensory confusion that can lead to panic in this 8-year-old girl. Due to this condition and malnutrition in the orphanage, Ana's ability to communicate was delayed.

Although her hearing will never fully be restored, Ana is now able to hear better through the use of hearing aids and her ability to communicate improved dramatically through auditory/oral therapy.

Ana's family came to CYT because of the HEART program. After discussing Ana's special needs with program director Josie Strickler, Ana and her family were welcomed with open arms and the program has been blessed by Ana's spirit and accomplishments.

When discussing the similarities of the show Annie, and her own life, she always comes back to this idea: God has a special plan for her, a girl who began life as an orphan and played an orphan in the production of one of the best-loved children's musicals of all time. We all agree!

