

Patricia Heaton's Twitter Challenge Shines Spotlight on Down Syndrome Adoption Ministry

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3,594 Followers and Counting: Since I [first mentioned](#) what Reece's Rainbow is calling "The @PatriciaHeaton Twitter Challenge" on Tuesday, the Twitter feed of the Down syndrome adoption ministry has attracted an additional 2,000+ followers, with more rolling in as the story of the actress's offer to donate \$1 for each [@ReecesRainbow](#) follower up to 10,000 [has spread around](#) the blogosphere.

In a [note on her Facebook page](#), Heaton tells how she became aware of Reece's Rainbow through one of her Twitter followers and was brought to tears by a [page on the Reece's Rainbow site](#) dedicated to waiting children who passed away before they could find their forever families. "Between work and family, I don't have a lot of time," she wrote. "But I do have financial means and a public profile. God charges us to use our circumstances, whatever they may be, to share His love with the world. I had just hit the 10,000 mark for [Twitter](#) followers, and the idea hit me -- give \$10,000 dollars, one dollar for every 'Tweaton' who follows Reece's Rainbow. Accomplish supporting this great organization along with spreading awareness. ... I am involved in supporting various charitable organizations, but I have recently been asking God to show me where he wants me to be. I think Reece's Rainbow is an answer to that prayer. These kids have had very few people to be their voice, but Andrea Roberts has changed all that. I am so grateful to be a part of her work."

I checked with Roberts, the executive director of Reece's Rainbow (and [mom to Reece](#), who inspired it), to see how the whole thing came about, and she told me that Heaton sent her an e-mail on Monday and the challenge evolved from there. The donation will go to the [Voice of Hope fund](#), which covers the nonprofit organization's operating expenses. You can read more of what that entails on the [Reece's Rainbow site](#). As is mentioned on the Voice of Hope page, "It doesn't feel as warm and fuzzy as donating for a child's grant fund, but it is much needed!"

Following the [@ReecesRainbow Twitter page](#) is one way to help fund an organization that has helped more than 500 children with Down syndrome in international orphanages find families in the past four years. You can also [make donations directly to the grant fund](#) of waiting children, or commit to [praying for those children](#) and their families-to-be. Reece's Rainbow also has a [CafePress store](#) if you want to advocate with both your pocketbook and your wardrobe.

One nice side-effect of Patricia Heaton's challenge is the way that her [main Facebook page](#) and the [one with the note about Reece's Rainbow](#) are collecting lots of comments from families whose lives have been changed by the adoption of children with Down syndrome. It's a testimonial to Reece's Rainbow, adoption, and the adorableness and desirability of children with Down syndrome, right there on the Facebook page of a TV star. Aside from the money raised, it's hard not to think that hearts will be changed by this, too.

Logo courtesy of Reece's Rainbow