

'Little' Brothers Share Big Bond



Will and Max Graf are closer than most brothers. The boys share a special bond because each knows what it's like to be a small person in a big world. They both have a medical condition that will keep them from growing to an average height. Each of them is 13 years old and about 3 feet, 7 inches tall. Some people call people like Will and Max dwarfs, but they prefer being called "little people" or LPs.

After Will was born, his parents began learning about little people so they could help their son make his way in the world. When Will was 2, his parents saw a picture of a South Korean boy -- another little person -- who was the same age as Will. The boy was an orphan, so the Graf family decided to adopt him. They named their new son Max. The two boys liked each other as soon as they met. Even though they were born on opposite sides of the Earth, they bonded like real brothers. "I think that's what we were hoping -- that the two of them together would be stronger than either one apart," said their father, John Graf.

NEWS WORD BOX

dwarf	medical
average	support
bond	orphan

Today, Will and Max have lots of friends in middle school, and they try to do everything the other kids do. The boys support each other when people they don't know say things or stare at them. If one of them is having a bad day, his brother is the one person who completely understands.

MORE FACTS ABOUT LITTLE PEOPLE

- Will's parents, older sister, and younger brother all are average size.
- The Graf brothers go to events sponsored by a group called Little People of America. At the events they can spend time with other kids like them.
- About 300,000 people in the U.S. have the condition that makes them little people.

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

What are some challenges that Will and Max face in the "big world"? What might be done to help them adapt to, or overcome, those challenges?