

*A message from*  
**JULIA ROBERTS** *about*

# RETT SYNDROME



I want to tell you about a neurological disorder called Rett syndrome. You may not have heard of Rett syndrome, but it has affected countless lives, including my own. All it took was one smile from Abigail and I wanted to help.

Rett syndrome becomes apparent after 6-18 months of early normal development, most often in girls. It results in a regression that leads to severe lifelong handicaps including loss of speech, hand use and mobility. There may be 200,000 girls and women worldwide who have Rett syndrome. We hope to find them—to provide care, advocacy and research that will make a difference.

A handwritten signature of Julia Roberts in black ink.

To learn more or to see how you, too, can help call

**1-800-818-RETT**

or visit our website at [www.rettsyndrome.org](http://www.rettsyndrome.org)

**IRSF** INTERNATIONAL  
RETT SYNDROME  
FOUNDATION

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## What is Rett Syndrome?

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Rett syndrome (RTT) is a genetic neurological disorder that occurs *almost exclusively in girls*. Rett syndrome becomes apparent after 6–18 months of early normal development. It results in a regression that leads to lifelong handicaps including loss of speech, purposeful hand use and mobility. It is often misdiagnosed as autism or cerebral palsy.

## What is IRSF?

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The International Rett Syndrome Foundation is the largest and most comprehensive not-for-profit organization for parents, scientists, interested professionals and others concerned with Rett syndrome. *The mission of IRSF is to support and encourage medical research to find a cure and treatments for RTT, to increase public awareness, and to provide information and emotional support to families of children with RTT.*

## Who's Involved and Affected?

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*Somewhere in the world, every 5 hours a child is born with Rett syndrome.* RTT affects 1 in 10,000–15,000 live female births. There are over 200,000 girls and women worldwide who have Rett syndrome.

## Why Now?

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Since the discovery of the gene that causes Rett syndrome and recent research that shows the reversibility of RTT symptoms in mice, we now have an unprecedented and historic opportunity to fund crucial new research with the potential to impact millions of lives and advance the understanding of Rett syndrome and many other related disorders. Because Rett syndrome is a classic chromatin disorder, it has become the “rosetta stone” of brain disorders and likely holds the key to unlock treatments and cures for other related disorders including autism, schizophrenia and some forms of mental retardation. *Research can make a difference to provide care today and a cure tomorrow.*