

“Graham's story really touched me. Had I, or my family members, been able to see even just the trailer, I know so much of my son's life would have been easier.”

-Jennifer NieKamp
Delaware



Jennifer Niekamp tells her own AUTISTIC-LIKE story...

“When Joshua was just about 18-months old, I began to notice some of his answers were off. We'd ask him, ‘What color is this toy car?’ and he'd answer ‘black’, when the car was orange, but the wheels were black...something was just off. But he was so bright-eyed and engaging, everyone kept trying to reassure me.

For some reason, much of the medical community is missing these kids. Doctors told me, ‘Everything is fine- he’s just a slow learner...or ‘He’s just a difficult kid.’ I spent over two years trying to get a diagnosis for Joshua. So many family members and therapists we saw just thought that he needed more firm parenting.

But inside my heart, when I laid in bed at night, I knew it was something else. More firm parenting wouldn't stop an odd period of exhaustion everyday. It wouldn't explain why the windy days would drive him to insanity, or why at four he was licking the walls at the mall. Or a host of other peculiar behaviors that made life tortuous for Josh. I took Joshua to three private specialists who dismissed my concerns. There was this unstated attitude by doctors that he was clearly not autistic so there must be nothing wrong with him. I was lucky to have people in my life who told me that I was not crazy and that my son did indeed need real help. That he was not difficult. That his life could be improved.

Fortunately, there's a Delaware state program that screens every preschool child for possible learning difficulties. Eventually, Joshua was referred to an excellent specialist who created a sensory profile, and sent to an OT for therapy. By then, Joshua was over four years old, and I had been trying to find help for close to two years.

Now my son has a new life. A small part of me still mourns the loss of time- loss of Josh's time. He lost nearly every afternoon for two years, when all he needed was little things, a lemon slushy and a weighted blanket. Over 730 afternoons of crying and screaming unnecessarily lost. Had the information been more readily available in the mainstream public- the medical community would be more likely to consider the possibility of Sensory Processing Integration Disorder.

So many parents are so desperate for answers. I pray that this film can be widely broadcast to the general public so the people who need to see it the most will. Not just the families of the over-diagnosed, but also the never-diagnosed-at-all.”

If you would like to share your family's story, please write to erik@autisticlike.com