

I Could Not Do This Alone

As told by Lisa Patrick

Photo caption: Joshua, with Heather, one of his support workers.



I would like to briefly share how the Steven's Center has helped my Family.

On October 11, 2000 I had a set of boy/girl twins. Our daughter was perfectly healthy but our son Joshua was not so blessed. He immediately was diagnosed with a cleft palate and Pierre Robin Sequence. He had breathing compromises and feeding issues. This day began our long journey of heartache and happiness. Joshua went through many surgeries including Tracheostomy, feeding tube, palate repair and multiple ear tubes.

As he grew other areas of concern arose. Joshua was not only medically fragile but he was also going to have severe cognitive delays, be nonverbal, and have behavioral issues. I began searching for places, people, and agencies for any help that my son was able to receive.

I have three other children that needed their mother and they were being slighted. My husband and I love Joshua as any parent loves a child, but he requires so much more than a typically developing child that we had nothing to give our other children or each other. Our family was suffering. With all of my inquiring I discovered help for my son and family.

I have been with four agencies. I had a lot of trouble with the staff regarding service coverage for Joshua, getting his plan completed, and workers showing up or showing up only to fall asleep on the job. A few agencies would call saying the worker was sick we have no coverage, and that was it.

Finally I found the perfect fit for our family and son. The Stevens Center has given us hope. Roger Bailey came to our home to talk to us about the Stevens Center. He answered all of our questions and made us feel important to him and the agency.

Barbara Thomason has been an angel sent to us. She makes things so easy for us to get coverage for Joshua. If someone calls in sick, which is rare, she finds coverage.

We have been with the Stevens Center for four years. Our workers are treated with respect and understanding. Barbara is always available. I can call or email her anytime of the day or night and she gets back to me right away. Our workers are reviewed often and observed. I get surveys on each worker every 60-90 days to evaluate them. I also get surveys to evaluate the agency. I never have a question go unanswered or a problem that is not resolved.

Without the Stevens Center my family would probably not be functional. I could not do this alone.

The workers have made Joshua so much more independent and able to function in the community. This past summer we took a family vacation to the beach. One evening we took Joshua to the pool. He does not socialize with other kids often or seem to even be aware that they are around. He jumped into the pool and joined a group of children playing catch. I held my breath and watched. Was he going to hit one of them or grab the ball and run or just ignore them altogether? He stood in the circle and another child threw the ball to Joshua. He caught it and threw it to another child. They had included him! He was being very social!! They played for close to an hour. The children did not treat him like he was different! He was one of the kids!

Another example of the work of the Stevens Center was apparent one morning when I got up smelling something yummy! I went into the kitchen where Joshua had gotten pancakes out of the fridge, heated them up, and had syrup all over them. He couldn't reach the plates so we had pancakes in the microwave! Independence! He needs the workers to better himself and loves them. They are part of our family. Thank you to the Stevens Center for serving my child and making him a better person.

If you live in Lee or Harnett County and would like the Stevens Center to be your NC Innovations service provider, please call Roger Bailey at 919.776.4048

