

# THE CENTER FOR AUTISM & NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS

Patient Testimonial, April 2017



You could say Dylan is a veteran patient of The Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Now 17 years old, he was diagnosed and began treatment at The Center when he was just four years old.

Dylan's mother, Jennifer, knew her son was autistic before the age of two but struggled for years to get a diagnosis. While he was a very loving and happy baby, she started to notice a decline in his ability to gesture, speak and respond to his own

name between the age of 19 months and two years old.

She was living in Kentucky at the time and it wasn't until she moved back to California that an intake appointment was booked at The Center and Jennifer finally got a diagnosis. Dylan was moderate-severe on the autism spectrum.

"When we finally got the diagnosis, The Center staff helped me get over my preconceived perception of what having autism meant and would mean for my son. In that very moment, I felt grateful that they were taking us on," said Jennifer.

Over the years, Dylan and Jennifer have come to see and view The Center as a safe and comfortable place. From potty training to behavioral therapy to aid in dealing with aggression and anger, Dylan has received support and services that run the gamut.

"I've learned to take all milestones and celebrate them. I don't think we would be anywhere near where we are today without the help of The Center," said Jennifer.

Dylan has always loved music and instruments so The Center's partnership with Pacific Symphony and its Heartstrings Program has created a unique sensory and auditory experience for him.



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The performances allow the children to have an up-close and personal interaction with music and the instruments in a safe and comfortable setting. Concluding with an instrument “petting zoo,” the children are encouraged to touch and play the instruments under the guidance of Symphony musicians.

“Dylan looks forward to the event each year and he has really come to respect the instruments and the music,” said Jennifer.

Jennifer has another teenager son, Dylan’s younger brother. The Center has not only been instrumental in supporting Dylan’s progress but also in Jennifer and her other sons’ ability to cope and be there for Dylan in ways that it is needed most.

Jennifer concludes, “The Center really is a one-stop shop for people like me and other families. There is training for Dylan and even training for me and my other son. Everyone on your chain knows your child, they know you and they care.”



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