

# THE CENTER FOR AUTISM & NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS

Patient Testimonial, February 2019

From the day she was born, Madison seemed different from other infants.

At an age when most infants enjoy interacting with people and exploring their environment, Madison's natural progression and behavior didn't seem to develop in the normal sequence. With combined cyclic vomiting syndrome and seizures requiring surgery, her mother, Angel, was referred to take her to The Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders, where a team of experts found her behavior and development screened as Fragile X syndrome (FXS).

The genetic condition that causes a range of developmental problems including learning disabilities and cognitive

impairment, can be diagnosed by a DNA blood test, unlike ASD that is a behaviorally-defined diagnosis. FXS causes intellectual disability, behavioral and learning challenges and various physical characteristics. The syndrome is one cause out of many, for a person to manifest the clinical symptoms that define ASD.

The complex medical condition left Angel confused and worried, but The Center provided the mother and child hope and help.

"I found a great team of support at The Center," Angel said. "They have not only helped us tremendously with Madison, but they've encouraged me to take care of myself."

After the diagnosis, Madison continued to receive support from The Center's services during a critical time. She began having seizures and was admitted into the hospital to have surgery on her front lobe bone flap, where the front portion of the skull is removed to allow the brain to release swelling and pressure.

During her surgery, Madison was put into a medically-induced coma and on life support. Over the next few months, she recovered slowly as she relearned how to talk, eat and walk. Angel continues to take Madison to The Center, where they meet regularly with her provider who addresses concerns and provides support on how to approach and implement skills to improve Madison's behaviors.

Today, the seven-year-old finds joy in art, drawing and writing stories. She has a creative mind, Angel said, as she likes to make crafts and form objects out of play-dough.

Angel is confident that with the support of The Center she can continue to learn how to best help Madison medically and physically while keeping her safe.

"I want to find a good path and we feel like The Center is going to help her find her path," Angel said. "I know they have the resources to help us get through it. We would be helpless without them."



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