

Winner~ Jean Greener

My son Johnny has been receiving early intervention since May 2016. Here we are, a year later, and I am so glad that he has had the opportunity to receive Early Intervention Services! It has changed his life and mine. Here's our story....

When Johnny first started getting services, it was very hard to engage him in any type of social interactions or back and forth play. He wasn't interested in playing with adults or his twin brother. He would often go off by himself and look closely at his toys and then throw them over his shoulder. He did not play with any of his toys appropriately and had no interest in learning how to do so. He had no language and his only real way to communicate his needs and wants was to cry. He would often have tantrums and hit or scratch people due to his frustrations. He would only give you his attention for one minute at a time.

Based on his behaviors, I asked everyone who came in contact with him if they thought I should have him tested for Autism. Both of his therapists and those who evaluated him agreed that I should. He got his diagnosis in July at the age of 22 months. Once that happened, I requested that his instruction be specialized for his disability.

This is when Theresa came into our lives as Johnny's Developmental Instruction Teacher. She was and still is simply AMAZING! She taught Johnny to look at her. His eye contact has improved so much! She sings and dances and is so engaging! From the first time she said, "Ready... Set..." and Johnny said, "Go!" We both cheered and Johnny smiled with joy! Happiness filled the room! Johnny began

learning to interact socially that day. Thereafter, the enthusiasm and excitement from continued during every session. Every little accomplishment Johnny's made was celebrated. I decided to request an additional session each week with her because I knew Early Intervention was working! In addition to teaching Johnny, Theresa has also taught me so much about ways to engage my son and help him grow and progress. She has played and continues to play a HUGE role in my son's developmental progress!

Now, he looks at me! He laughs with me! He sings and dances with me! He plays with his twin brother! He actually plays with toys appropriately! He plays with trucks and cars! He places shapes in sorters and pieces in puzzles. He identifies colors, shapes, objects, and people! He says 40-50 words! He gives you his attention for an hour at a time! He wants to play! He wants to learn!

None of this would have happened without Early Intervention! I am so grateful for the services that have been provided to Johnny. They have helped both of us so much! It has been an emotional journey, but Johnny has met so many social & developmental goals and continues to each and everyday.