

***“It’s okay... he’s breathing now.”*** I would quickly realize these words were coming from my husband as he spoke to a 911 operator. Our son Adam had stayed home from school that day with what seemed like flu symptoms. What we realized, however, is that our son was having a seizure. After briefly stabilizing Adam he would experience a second seizure.

A week later while at the hospital, my husband Dale and I would soon learn our son had epilepsy. After three and a half years as parents to a happy and healthy toddler, this day would mark the beginning of a dramatic change in Adam’s development and life as we knew it.

Adam was diagnosed with Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome, a form of severe epilepsy that strikes between the ages of three and five. In addition to experiencing frequent seizures, it also results in intellectual disabilities. Raising Adam would require assistance from family and a large circle of friends including schools and community service providers like The Arc.

Our family’s relationship with The Arc began in December of 2005 with respite services. We started slowly, building up trust that others could care for our son. We had been made aware of The Arc’s after school enrichment program when we faced an unexpected need for after school care. Here Adam would be with children his same age and be able to socialize and participate in age appropriate activities. This program bridges the gap for many working parents. For us this was a lifesaver. Without it one of us would have had to stop working.

We soon learned having a friend like The Arc would help us care for our son. It would become a partnership that would allow Dale and I to continue working knowing that Adam was happy and receiving quality care. As parents of a child with disabilities like Adam’s there is a struggle to find a balance between the ongoing care required and individual time to find normalcy in life; time for careers, time to maintain health, time to manage a household and time to step away and recharge.

We ask you to consider a tax deductible gift to The Arc so that families like ours will always have a place to turn when the unexpected happens. Your gift of \$1000, \$100 or any amount you can give, will keep these vital services in place now and into the future. Our family has been blessed to be part of The Arc family for over 10 years. We can’t begin to thank the many generous donors who have supported the mission of The Arc over the years.

“The Arc is a catalyst in the community for parents of special needs children to connect by providing events throughout the year that promote families meeting families, sharing their stories, supporting one another and realizing we are not alone” Dale shared.

Our family was dealt an unexpected blow, but The Arc provided invaluable community services that kept us together. We value knowing that when we drop our child off he will be safe. We value that The Arc not only provides service to our son, but through family and community outreach, we have learned many things about being a parent to a special needs child.

We know how much agencies like The Arc have been impacted by changes to Medicaid. This has resulted in unbudgeted expenses coupled with delayed reimbursements. An investment in The Arc is an investment in a fiscally sound organization with a history of standing by ready to serve. Please consider a gift today so that families like ours will always have a friend like The Arc for generations to come.

***Sara and Dale Todd***

P.S Your tax deductible donation can sustain critical programs for families like the Todds. If you make your donation by December 31st your gift will be matched dollar for dollar, up to a total of \$5000, through the gift of a friend.

