

## TRANSCRIPTION OF PARENT VIDEOS

### ■ **Thoughts from Sally Prouty.**

*It's been quite a journey for us. We learned about the concept of intervention fortunately when he was months old and we asked school districts. School districts had never heard of it. And so my husband and I became trail blazers. We, I don't want to say fought, we were respectfully demanding. We didn't give up. We kept pushing and eventually we were able to get an intervener for our son.*

*We had the most wonderful team in the world, the best OT, the best PT, the best vision person, deaf-hard of hearing, O&M, and speech person, but without a way to bring that information to your child, it doesn't exist for your child. So an intervener would communicate that information, allowing them to learn. It's important to trust yourself. You can do this. I didn't think that I could do this, but here I am 28 years later. You've got to remember that you are working with experts in the field of education, but trust yourself that you are an expert on your child, and you know what's best for your child. Be an equal member of the team, and you can do it.*

### ■ **Kim Laugger's story.**

*Learning to navigate the IEP process is something that happens over time. But we have to just start. Because it's through that process that we learn together with our child's team on what we need to do to make education successful for them. It's not a one-way to do it for any one child, we just need to start. So you might be afraid that I don't know how to do this, I know my child needs and intervener. But I encourage you to learn through these materials and just get started with your team.*

*So the intervener is a very important part of the team and is essential for my child to access his educational curriculum but that happens within the construct of the entire team. So the more the team understands deafblindness the more powerful the process of intervention becomes.*

*We were lucky in that our deafblind project started an intervener training program when my son was 2 ½ years old. So he has had an intervener from the beginning of his educational career. The people that I work with have not been so lucky. They are in districts or perhaps with schools who believe that the intervener leads to dependence, they don't believe in the philosophy, and they discourage the families. Or they may have a place that has lots of education about deafblindness but they believe that there's no need to have that one to one with that expertise. What I encourage you to pay attention to is does your child have access? Continue to look at, no matter which school it is, when your child is in that setting, do they have continual access to the educational curriculum and what their peers are doing?*

- **Melanie Knapp speaks.**

*My son, Christian, didn't get an intervener until he was 21 years old. She was skilled, trained, had experience, and I don't care what anybody else tells you, it does matter. He was smart. He needed that person that could bring the world to him and his communication mode; and Christian went from gestures to calendar symbols to learning signs, having friends, getting out in the community, having his own vending machine business, and people knowing him and Christian knowing other people. And this was all within the first year that he was with an intervener so I can't even tell you how happy it made our family that we were fortunate enough to have an intervener.*

- **Thoughts from Cheryl LeVasseur.**

*I encourage you to seek out an intervener and use the suggestions that we have put out there to help you through that process because it's never too late to get an intervener and to have that for your child.*

- **Clara Berg's story.**

*Seeing Kenny the way he is acting now as an adult, I just think how helpful it would have been for him to have an intervener when he was going through school years. Did I have to wait until he was an adult to follow my instincts and to really give him all the services that he needed, to have to pay out of pocket to have somebody trained as an intervener, somebody who would know how to deal with him? Seeing what Kenny's doing today, seeing the way he acts, he grew up as an adult and how productive he feels and how happy he is. He has a full life. What a difference it would have made to have Kenny with a person that would have been properly trained many, many years ago when he was in the school. It would have made a big, big difference. If I could dream today on having Kenny start all over again, I think I would have fought much harder and I would not have let anybody, allowed anybody to tell me "no" he cannot, because I knew Kenny can.*

*We talk about behaviors being communication. Believe me it's true. We could have enjoyed so many more years of Kenny being happy and really showing what he can do just because he has somebody to tell him about the world, to be the connection between here and the shadow and the silence around him. So if there is anything or something we need to fight when the kids are young it is to convince everybody that we know our child best, and since we know our child best the right thing to do is to have him have an intervener.*

- **Vivecca Hartman's story.**

*You know if only we just knew it all in the beginning, it would have been so wonderful. If we could have started out with a healthy child, without all that past experience to overcome. I hope that the goal of this project is that other families can learn from our experiences because it's real, it's vallant, it works. Children*

*can prosper and do wonderful things and grow and be happy. A trained intervener is something you cannot advocate for more strongly. Because when you see one interact with a child, it is just heartwarming to see that child come alive, where they were not before.*

*I would just implore each of you to take that step, that initiative, to go out and seek and find and make it readily available in your area earlier rather than later, because the impact of that knowledge, earlier on for your child, can be such a wonderful thing.*