

Josh

By Elly , mom of Josh, age 3-1/2, with AS

Although I don't live in NJ (I live in VA), thankfully, through the wonders of the internet, I am able to read the wonderful stories that other parents have posted. This gives me the courage to also post our story. Our Josh is aged 3 1/2. About 2 years ago, after many months of tears and uncertainty, I took him to our local childrens hospital. I was worried that we had an "attachment problem". Although I stayed home with my son, I never felt that we "connected". He seldom gave me eye contact, and wouldn't "listen". I have another child, a girl, aged 14 and she was very different (obviously). I am also a child counselor by training, so that made my question my skills as a mom and as a professional, because this little boy just would not respond to me.

The experts assured me that there was no attachment problem, but still the problems persisted. I took him back this past November, asking if he might have a severe case of ADHD, cause he wouldn't ever stop moving. He gave up naps at age 2 and was very negative. He wouldn't let my daughter or me sing and that was something we loved to do as a family, before Josh.

At this second assessment, they found the criteria that allowed them to dx AS. At first it was a shock, because I thought they would say ADHD, but as I look back on it, I always did think there was something autistic about Josh, no gazes, no interest in friendships, tuned out, etc.

The good news about all of this is that before I had nowhere to turn, no one to talk with about my frustrations. And now, there is a wealth of information and support. I attended a meeting where Drs. Ami Klin and Kenneth Towbin spoke. My husband and I are going to a Tony Attwood conference next month. I am learning so much. We are fortunate that Josh attended a Montessori School, where the teachers have been very open about accepting new ways of interacting with Josh. The intellectual stimulation has been wonderful for him, and now that they are learning about his syndrome, everything seems smoother. The addition of Ritalin (2.5 mg in the am) seems to allow him to slow down long enough to learn something.

He is now in an afternoon pre-school for special needs kids in our county, and he really seems to love it. I believe that we were "chosen" for this child because we really can handle it (some days better than others). I forgot to mention that Josh was conceived through in-vitro, cause we wanted a second child so badly. I wanted one who was huggy and cuddly. I didn't get that one, but I got one that taught me the real meaning of "loving my child" and that is loving the child that HE is not one that I wanted. I am thankful that he is happy (so far) and very interested in the world. Only time will tell what his future will bring, but we are committed to getting him the best care and education that we can. Sleep still doesn't happen too well, and we are tired a lot, but we still wouldn't trade Josh for anything. Thanks for all of you being here for each other.