

Possibilities

in Education and Training

Fall 2024



Joey's New Chapter: Embracing Community Living

By Michelle Johnston, Program Coordinator, Center for Disabilities and Development



Joey Coffin
with mother
Becky and
brother Jason.



Joey with his
caregivers,
Julian and
Colette.

Joey Coffin recently embarked on a new chapter in his life by transitioning to community living after spending most of his adult years at ChildServe in Johnston. Becky, his mom, has tirelessly advocated for him throughout his life and has always believed in his ability to lead a fulfilling life.

After applying to eighteen long-term facilities statewide and encountering rejections due to Joey's high level medical needs, they chose to explore an alternative option: finding a host home. Luckily, they discovered an ideal match— a host home where Joey's caregivers, Julian, a medical assistant and Colette, a registered nurse, could offer the medical expertise he requires. Also, with children of their own, it was a good fit since Joey shines when he can socialize. The initial six months were challenging as they worked to establish routines and arrange new doctors and medical supplies. However, with determination and the right support, Joey began to flourish.

Joey discovered happiness in his new surroundings. He especially enjoys car rides to places like Costco, the bank, driving around

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Saylorville Lake—anywhere, really. He also enjoys bowling and soaking up the fresh air outdoors. After receiving an adaptive bike years ago but having no place to ride it, Joey is finally able to ride his bike through the neighborhood where he lives. Since Becky lives only 20 minutes away, she can visit often and loves being able to see him thriving and watching as her dream for him has come to life.

Joey's Managed Care Organization (MCO) Case Manager connected Becky and Joey to Amanda Pollard, Money Follows the Person (MFP) Transition Specialist. The MFP program offers eligible Medicaid recipients funding for the transition services and additional supports required during the first year of community living. Amanda was instrumental in coordinating the necessary adjustments for Joey's new home, such as a remodeled bathroom, a ramp, and a shower chair. Her commitment helped alleviate Becky's worries and facilitated a smoother transition for Joey.

For families considering a similar transition, Becky has some valuable advice:

Explore Your Options: It is essential to consider all available resources and trust your instincts. While some may be skeptical, you know what is best for your child, so go with your gut.

Teamwork is Key: The transition process is a team effort. The support from his MFP Transition Specialist and his Managed Care Organization (MCO) Case Manager was fundamental in making this move a reality.

Take a Leap of Faith: Moving to the community can be daunting, but sometimes it requires taking a chance. If things do not go as planned, remember there is always a Plan B.

Becky actively shares the knowledge and insights she has gained from her experience raising two children in the waiver program, Joey's brother Jason is also in the program. Currently, she serves on the HOME Project Steering Committee, which is part of Iowa's effort to redesign Medicaid's community-based services (CBS). This initiative aims to enhance how Medicaid members find hope and opportunities in many environments (HOME). The overarching goal is to guarantee that everyone can access top-notch behavioral health, disability, and aging services within their communities.

Joey's story is one of resilience and hope, showing that with the right support, living in the community can be a fulfilling and enriching experience. As he continues to adapt to his new life, Joey serves as an inspiring example for others navigating similar paths.

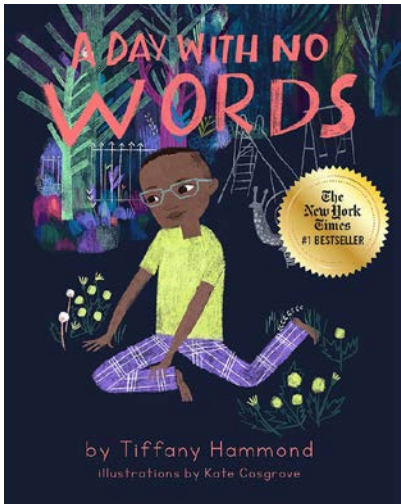


Joey and Julian take a ride around the neighborhood on his adaptive bike.



The Disability Resource Library is constantly hard at work to provide the most useful and up to date material available for the disability community and their families. This month the DRL would like to feature some of the newest items added to the collection. Check-outs are available at no cost and do not require an appointment with the University of Iowa Hospital or Center for Disabilities and Development.

For more information or recommendations of further resources, please contact Mitch DeFauw at mitchell-defauw@uiowa.edu.

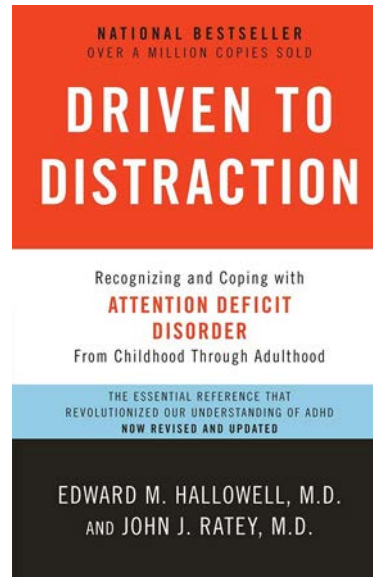


A Day with No Words

by Tiffany Hammond

A Day With No Words invites readers into the life of an Autism Family who communicates just as the child does, without spoken language. This colorful and engaging picture

book for young readers shares what life can look like for families who use nonverbal communication, utilizing tools to embrace their unique method of “speaking.” The story highlights the bond between mother and child and follows them on a day where they use a tablet to communicate with others.



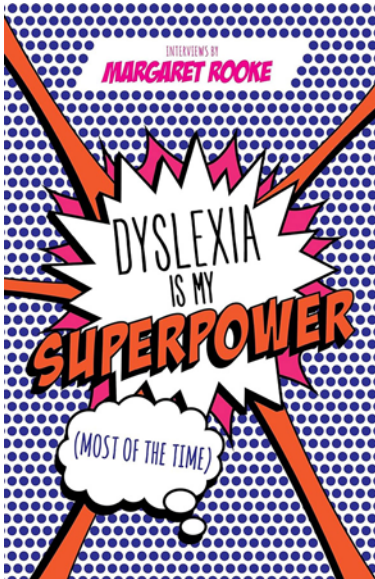
Driven to Distraction: Recognizing and Coping with Attention Deficit Disorder from Childhood Through Adulthood

by Edward M. Hallowell, M.D. and John J. Ratey, M.D.

Through vivid stories of the experiences of their patients (both adults and children), Drs. Hallowell and

Ratey show the varied forms ADD takes -- from the hyperactive search for high stimulation to the floating inattention of daydreaming. They dispel common myths, offer helpful coping tools, and give a thorough accounting of all treatment options as well as tips for dealing with a diagnosed child, partner, or family member. But most importantly, they focus on the positives that can come with this “disorder”—including high energy, intuitiveness, creativity, and enthusiasm.

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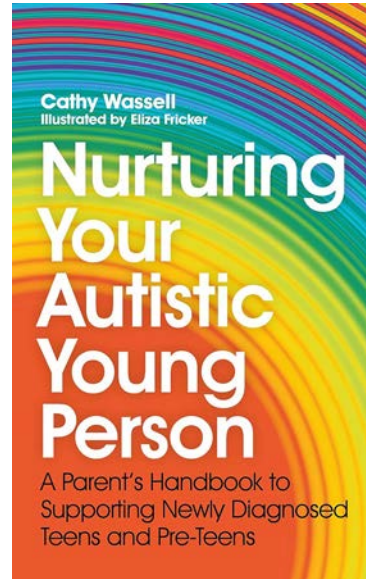
Dyslexia is My Superpower (Most of the Time)

by Margaret Rooke

In more than 100 interviews, children and young adults reveal their personal tips and tactics for honing the creative benefits of dyslexia, enabling them to thrive in school and beyond.

Strategies include

ways to develop confidence and self-belief. The contributors have outlined specific approaches they feel have helped them, and others that haven't. There is an additional section for professionals who work in education or special learning environments, with advice given by school students themselves.

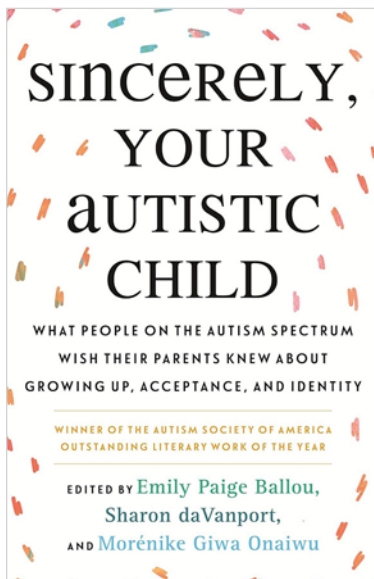


Nurturing Your Autistic Young Person: A Parent's Handbook to Supporting Newly Diagnosed Teens and Pre-Teens

by Cathy Wassell

Cathy Wassell, CEO of Autistic Girls Network, has tailored this handbook to support parents with older children or teenagers who are

at the identification stage, walking them through the basics in an engaging and accessible manner. She addresses key challenges for this age group, including co-occurring conditions, puberty, and safeguarding, as well as looking to the future, advising on schooling options, and beyond.



Sincerely, Your Autistic Child

edited by Sharon daVanport, Morénike Giwa Onaiwu, and Emily Paige Ballou

A diverse collection of autistic voices that highlights how parents can avoid common mistakes and misconceptions, and make their child feel truly accepted, valued, and celebrated for who they are. Most resources available for parents come from psychologists, educators, and doctors, offering parents a narrow and technical approach to autism. Sincerely, Your Autistic Child represents an authentic resource for parents written by autistic people themselves.

Possibilities in Education and Training is a quarterly publication of University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital Center for Disabilities and Development, Iowa's University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities. It is an outreach initiative of the Conner Training Connection, a program funded by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support the transition of individuals with disabilities from congregate to community-based settings.

It's part of life to have obstacles. It's about overcoming obstacles; that's the key to happiness.

Herbie Hancock

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