Brandon Beck

The Long and Winding Road

Background

Brandon just turned 24.

Autism

Type 1 diabetes

Piano skills

Strong computer skills

We Tried Everything…

- Speech therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Social interaction (nursery school - our first dose of "discrimination")
- Dr. Stanley Greenspan (playtime - closing the circles)
- Serena Weider
- Auditory Training (Tomatis)
- Vision therapy
- Vitamin therapy
- Allergy testing and drops
- Dr. Bernard Rimlin
- DAN protocol

We tried everything (cont'd)

- Diet Change
  - Free of wheat, corn, casein, gluten, soy, yeast, sugar.
  - Health improvements, weight gain, behavior changes
  - Problem - find the products!

- Drugs - tried respiradol, wellbutrin, zoloft, lexapro, et al.
- Chelation
- NOW - Diet, Lexapro, Novolog

17 yrs and 8 schools later

- Early intervention
- Mainstreaming
- Teachers and administrators - make it happen.
- Advocate - IEP, Ass't Technology
- PERSISTENT
- BRANDON FULLY EARNED HIS H.S. DIPLOMA!

The New Directions Waiver

- 5th in the state of Maryland
- Self - Direction Model.
  - Gives us the opportunity to choose providers and services, and have greater control over funds spent on these supports..
- We have a staff of 5 employees
  - Job coach
  - Personal support day and evening
  - Cook for special diet
- Piano lessons
- Speech
- Respite

The Transition to the Real World

ෞ At 20 - Brandon learns to read Hebrew fluently and had Bar-Mitzvah.

ෞ Part time job at the Howard County Public Library.

ෞ Peabody Award and scholarship

ෞ Recitals

ෞ Girlfriend

ෞ Rock and roll ensemble

The challenges continue:

ᘓ Appropriate work for his skills

ᘓ Social skills

ᘓ Diabetes - complications

ᘓ Living Independently with supports

What's Next?

- Are employers ready to make the most productive use of those who are disabled?

- Are neighbors ready to accept the disabled living in their neighborhoods?

- How do we break through the stereotyping and discrimination?