




REAL LIFE ADVICE FROM MOMS

WHOSE CHILDREN OVERCAME
TREMENDOUS HEALING CHALLENGES

An ebook by Documenting Hope



At Documenting Hope, we're all about healing kids. When you are on a healing journey with your child, it can be helpful to talk to other parents who have walked a similar path and triumphed over their child's health challenges.

Knowing how important it is to share this experience and wisdom, we asked parents of children who have overcome enormous health and developmental obstacles to share their advice with you.

We asked these parents: *“What advice would you share with a parent who has an impacted child? What do you wish you had known at the outset of your journey?”*

Here is what they said:

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1. Even the most severe kids can become independent! There is hope!!!! And you are not alone.

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2. I wish I knew about dietary intervention sooner.

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3. My advice would be to heal yourself along the way. When I tended to my own trauma, I was able to become a safe harbor for my child and when she felt safe, she healed faster. Also, never stop praying for our kids and never stop losing your faith in God. We need more prayer and more faith in this journey. God will navigate you to all the right places.

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4. Nutrition plays such an important role in the health of our children. Whether its mental or physical, what we eat affects our bodies. Lifestyle changes are hard...but things worth fighting for rarely come easy. The decisions we make today will make unmeasurable effects on their tomorrow. The mountain CAN be moved.

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5. *I saw normal docs, a specialist, and a naturopath. At the end of the day, my intuition was the only path that made a lasting difference. Trust your gut and investigate EVERYTHING!*

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6. *That you can come a long way following your instincts, not allowing inappropriate behaviour, encouraging 'normal' friendships. In some ways it was better not to know all would turn out well and made one work harder at it. I know now lucky we were as we had a child who we could pull out of his own world to embrace what was out there for him.*

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7. *Do not stop asking questions and doing research until you are satisfied. Listen to your gut and do not allow yourself to be brushed off, discouraged or defeated. If you have supports, lean on them.*

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8. *Look for that needle in the haystack. It is out there. Leave no rock unturned. Your child's future depends on it. Don't listen to those who say that you are trying to change your child. You are trying to help your child find his voice and to feel healthy again. When you set that goal to have him healed and verbal by 5, and realize it isn't happening in your timeline, adjust the timeline. It took us much longer than I thought it would. He is still on his journey, and that is okay. He is moving at his own pace.*

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9. Don't believe the 'life sentence' the doctors give you upon diagnosis. There is so much you can influence as the parent. Healing and reversing symptoms is real and gives everyone in the family HOPE. It's the only way ... to have hope and to embrace your journey as a family together.

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10. Supplements have had a much better impact than pharmaceuticals. But not all supplements are created equal. Diet is so important, it must be clean, free of GMOs, dairy and gluten free, hormone and antibiotic free, etc. Know that they aren't misbehaving on purpose; they want to be good and do well and most importantly they want your approval and love. Give it to them freely and often. It's not their fault, they're doing the best they can.

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11. Start the fish oil early, start everything early, enjoy their childhood, focus more on what they can do it than what they can't do. Love unconditionally and realize that worrying changes nothing.

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12. Don't give up searching for answers! Symptoms can always be improved, and healing is possible!

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13. Take little bites at this. You don't have to do every intervention at once. Small meaningful steps can lead to big changes down the road. You can do this. You are enough. Take breaks.

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14. Research and realize there is more than one right way to heal your child. Find the balance between focusing on your child's strengths and needs for improvements. If you only focus on the negative, you will have a harder time.

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15. Pay attention to all the little simple moments that bring great pleasure. Let those moments fuel your journey and keep you strong as a family. Focus on your husband, or wife, or other children just as much as you would the child struggling. I think the key to success is embracing the entire family and growing together as a unit.

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16. The most important thing is to trust your mother's instinct about what you think is best over any expert (teacher, doctor, therapist, adult autistic, etc.). While experts may know a bit about their expertise, I have found that no one knows my son's needs better than me. Learn from EVERYone. Find what applies to YOUR child, and let the rest go. Understand that there are some distinct sub-categories in autism. Find parents who have a child with similar issues as yours and is a little older. They will be your best guide. READ and UNDERSTAND the evaluation reports that you get about your child. You need to be able to articulate your child's needs if you are going to be an effective advocate for him.

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17. *Keep advocating for your child, keep looking for answers and solutions. I wish I knew earlier that there are so many different options and approaches that can help. Functional medicine, nutrition, various holistic modalities, etc. Healing is possible. It takes time and effort, but it's so rewarding to look back and recognize how far we've come.*

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18. *Celebrate the little victories!*

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19. *Honestly, at first, I treated it as a Mom. However, with the help of a friend I realized I had to approach it as a School Psychologist. So, I imagined what I would tell a parent and then took my own advice. First, I approached it medically: got tests run, hearing, vision, allergies, etc. Second, I contacted a specialist in Autism. Third, I worked with a Physical Therapist and Speech Pathologist. During this time, I started to gradually adjust his diet to eliminate things that I found through research might be a problem, (dairy, gluten, sugar, dyes, additives, etc.) and adding things that were found to be beneficial certain foods and supplements (probiotics and Omega 3). I did these things early before the Public School System would have ever intervened. It did cost a fair amount, but I feel the early intervention made a great impact. Also, I learned things from the Physical Therapist at the time that I could do at home which helped the process go faster and ultimately be cheaper.*

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20. Find your tribe! There is no replacement for a supportive group of like-minded moms to be on this journey with.

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21. Trust your God given mother instincts

a. * healing is possible even if conventional medicine doesn't agree.

* food is medicine. Look at the WAPF and learn how to eat like our ancestors did

* look into the GAPs diet AND work with a practitioner. Or find other natural modalities of healing and implement them strictly.

* Healing takes time. Lots of time. Ditch all the timeframes you have and keep supporting the body.

* healing from within is not about suppressing symptoms but healing from within. Symptoms will show up and you should let the body express them.

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22. *You are capable of navigating this road and are entirely deserving of support. Don't settle for anyone who makes you feel otherwise! Trust your intuition, seek out professionals who can support you on your journey, and keep the end goal in mind. There is so much you can do with regards to cleaning up your lifestyle, and finding peace within yourself will be healing to your child. A proper diagnosis or physician is not necessary for you to begin to make positive changes to your mindset and lifestyle. Setting that as a strong foundation will make the whole road smoother.*

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23. *It's not going to be easy, but it is so worth it! Just hang on, and take joy in the small accomplishments. Keep looking for programs and support, because finding them is not always easy. Look into all the local (and not so local) Autism and Disability resources, you never know what might be available! Don't be afraid to advocate for your child!! If wandering is an issue, definitely look into Project Lifesaver with your count Sheriff's Department! Be open to new therapies and ideas, and different points of view.*

For more resources and support, check out DocumentingHope.com.

You can do this.
We're with you!