

It Takes a Village...

June 2015

"It takes a village to raise a child." I believe this old African proverb holds a lot of truth for any child, but even more so for a child with special needs.

The sad truth is that the families who could most use community support often feel isolated. The physical and emotional demands of raising a child with special needs can be exhausting, leaving little time for anything else. Even when life settles, our families are faced with the reality that their children are not able to participate in the activities that their normally developing peers can enjoy. They often feel sidelined and even more isolated. Ten years ago our community had little to offer to these special families.

Over the past several years, I have sat back in awe of all that is happening in our community for our special kids. Last year, Magical Meadows was able to expand and build an indoor riding facility to allow for year round therapeutic horseback riding lessons. In 2013, Lighthouse Autism Center opened a facility in Warsaw and began providing intensive behavioral therapy for children on the spectrum. Last month, Phase I of the Winona Lake Limitless Park was completed and our children have already been enjoying the Splashpad. Fundraising for Phase II, a universally accessible playground, is still underway. This summer, Parkview Warsaw YMCA added adaptive sports programming for our special children. On June 27th, the Northern Indiana Chapter of My Team Triumph, led by Captain Mason and Captain Jacob participated in their first triathlon at Winona Lake (the Optimist Triathlon). My Team Triumph seeks to provide unforgettable race experiences for individuals with disabilities.

These services all have one thing in common with Joe's Kids: they cannot happen without community support. We are seeing a dramatic change for the better for our families with special needs children and it is because we live in a community that cares. We are both blessed and proud to be part of this incredible community.



JOE'S 
KIDS Superstar

Meet Lane, a true Joe's Kids Superstar. Lane will be turning 10 years old next month. He enjoys music, movement and most of all being with friends and family who love him. Lane was born with Cerebral Palsy. He has very low muscle tone making things like holding his head up, rolling, sitting and using his arms or hands very difficult for him.

When Lane first came to us in December, he could not hold his head up, bear weight through his arms or use his arms or hands in a purposeful way. With a whole lot of hard work and help from his family, Lane has come a long way. As you can see, Lane LOVES to swing. He has begun to hold his head up when laying on his tummy or sitting with support. He is starting to work on rolling and using his hands to reach out to toys. Lane is blessed to have a family that loves him and will do anything to help him. He is making great gains because he works hard and has family and friends that expect great things of him!

www.joes-kids.org

In Mom's Words...

"Ruby has Down Syndrome and has been in several different therapies since she was 5 months old. She has just turned five years old and has improved so much since coming to Joe's Kids. Although she receives therapies through the school corporation, she also gets additional speech therapy and occupational therapy



here at Joe's. It has been great for her to come to a different, fun environment from the school setting. Her speech has improved tremendously. She is now using sentences instead of just one to two word phrases. She looks forward to going to Joe's Kids to see her therapists and talks about it all week. It has been great to have such a place here locally!"

-Sarah Mock

Mom to Ruby



Thank you to the many sponsors and volunteers who made this year's Splatterdash for Joe's Kids a success. On Saturday, May 2nd, we had nearly 350 runners/walkers come out to get splattered in color in support of our kids. With the help of many we raised \$9,545 for the children at Joe's!

