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We are the proud parents of 3 children. Jack 12, Jules 7 and Jake 5, are all in the Fairfield Public Schools. Both of our boys were in the Birth 2 Three program for different symptoms yet the same diagnoses.

From age 2, we suspected Jack was ASD. Through numerous testing with the Birth 2 Three, Yale Pediatric Hospital, private specialists and the school system, he was finally diagnosed ASD-PDDNOS at age 7.

Before his first birthday, Jake was diagnosed ASD- PDDNOS only because he exhibited all the signs Jack did not.

Thankfully, we were districted for the Early Childhood Center and Jennings Elementary Schools. Both boys currently have IEPs and we are more than grateful for the services they both receive.

We do not expect that they will be in the Public School System after they graduate high school with their typical peers. The question will then arise. The boys will legally be adults. Will they be able to handle college, are they college material, should they go to vocational schools? After that, who will hire them or understand an IEP in the real world?

Today's young adults exiting the "protected world of school" are not prepared. They do not have the skills, services or support they need or deserve. These children did not choose their disabilities, they were given to us by God. When God takes us, the parents or caregivers, who then will help and guide them in life?

We are small business owners in Stratford. We wonder if our children will continue the business when we can no longer or if they would be capable to do so. In addition to vocational services, please consider incentives for businesses to hire staff to assist workers with IEPs. Safety and insurance premiums are concerns for all businesses. Legislation should be reviewed and acts considered for those companies willing and able to employ our future candidates.

We ask you to think of all children effected in life today and tomorrow. Programs are needed to help better assist them with the struggles and challenges they will face. To ignore this need, not only effects the young adults who need assistance today, but also decades of children in the future.

We thank you in advance for your time and considerations,

Jon Damon



Jennifer Damon

