

Family and Care Coordinator Story

This piece reflects the experiences of the Green family who were supported by Care Coordination during the time of COVID-19. It addresses the hurdles they faced, and the positive outcomes Care Coordination can deliver, even during very challenging times. The family has given permission to share this interview. Names and some identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.

When fifteen-year-old Charlie came into Care Coordination he was not able to connect socially with his peers. Charlie had to attend class virtually which was very difficult for him. Charlie's father Stanley was concerned about the time Charlie was spending on video games due to not being able to do after school activities and businesses being closed. Stanley did not utilize the internet in his home. He also did not have a cellphone or tablet to connect to this new virtual world we are living in. This was difficult for Stanley to process and made it impossible at times to connect with people due to businesses not having staff in the office. At this time Stanley knew he needed additional support for his family and reached out to the school social worker Linda. Linda referred the family to Care Coordination.

During the initial visits Charlie struggled with engaging over the phone due to not being able to meet in person due to the pandemic. His father Stanley engaged well with Care Coordination but did not feel connected due to not being familiar with technology to join visits via video. School staff supported the family by coming in person to help sign paperwork and explain changes within the school. During the pandemic Charlie was able to return to school due to needing extra support with his academics. This helped Charlie a lot with feeling connected to his school and peers. Charlie expressed his hatred for the masks in school but was happy to attend school in person.

Care Coordination was able to connect the family to ConnectiKids for Charlie to have support with his academics and mentoring. Linda connected Charlie to basketball to help him get exercise due to the pandemic. Care Coordination connected Stanley to technology with a tablet. Stanley received help from his neighbor Angela with navigating the tablet and learning about emails, Google and more. As the family continued to push through the pandemic, more opportunities became available. Businesses began to open their doors and summer camps began running again. Care Coordination connected Charlie to his first traditional camp. Charlie did well and began to struggle in the middle of the summer. He loved the camp and enjoyed meeting new peers. Charlie worked hard to finish the summer strong at his camp and made everyone proud. Stanley expressed that on two occasions while out, Charlie was approached by multiple campers who wanted to say hi to their friend from camp. Stanley was hired by his neighbor for landscaping work. Stanley connected so well with his neighbor that he became a part of their family. They provided Stanley with a cell phone which improved his communication with Charlie's school and recreational activities.

As the Green's family time came to an end with Care Coordination, Stanley expressed happiness with the progress the family had made. Charlie engaged socially with peers the entire summer which was a first for him. He made new friends outside of school and wants to continue to engage in more traditional activities. Stanley noticed Charlie became more honest with him due to Care Coordination's involvement. Stanley is thankful to be able to communicate effectively for the family and for having support for Charlie throughout the pandemic.