

# August 2017 Success Story

## JOLENE & DREW SPELL

I called Families Helping Families of Jefferson after numerous attempts of trying to get a new diagnosis added to my son's IEP. I knew the urgency of updating the school with my son's new medical information and that it may bring on some changes on his IEP. I called and sent emails to my son's Special Education Coordinator asking to update information that pertains to my son's IEP and I would get the same response, "She'd get back to me," or "She will pass on the information to his teachers." So after several failed attempts with the Special Education Coordinator at my son's school, I called Families Helping Families of Jefferson and I spoke with Amber Weiland.

Through a long-term relationship with Amber, she communicated with me that I should try sending an email and request a response within five business days. She said if that didn't work, we can send another email with the same verbiage but this time, you should cc the principal and anyone else. I ended up writing a second request and yes this time I included the principal, which brought on a response.



With the assistance I received from FHF of Jefferson, I learned important aspects of communicating with my son's school



I had been waiting for so long so yes I was elated. The response was from the Special Education Coordinator and it was within the timeframe upon request. We ended up scheduling an IEP meeting to discuss the new medical findings of my son. At the meeting, we went over the current IEP and added additional diagnosis and supports to go with it. I was able to participate in giving updates and amend current IEP.

Once that was done, I felt much more confident and happier that his needs were going to be met thanks to Families Helping Families of Jefferson and Amber for spending the time in teaching me how to write a letter, follow-up, my rights and participate in the meeting as every parent should.

Sincerely,

Jolene Spell



As a takeaway, please remember it is always best to add a reply by date to any emails you send when requesting anything and make sure you keep a record of everything sent. Also, follow up any phone calls or emails with a letter or email so you will have a record of it is a good practice and general precaution. If in doubt, call Families Helping Families of Jefferson the Louisiana Parent Training & Information Center.



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