



Annette and Krissa Hernandez Change Lives

Adopted at age three, baby “Krissa” came to live with the Hernandez family. Like many parents, Annette Hernandez was reassured that Krissa would eventually be able to speak.



“They told me that she was spoiled...that she didn’t talk because she didn’t have to.”

Fortunately, Annette didn’t take the medical advice she was given. Instead, she worked tirelessly to get Krissa to express herself. Slowly, echolalic speech suggested that although Krissa could verbalize, she would need significant support services to help regain some developmental milestones.

By age ten, Krissa received a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (Aspergers). Annette felt that Krissa’s best chance of academic success was to homeschool her daughter so she sold her private business as a salon owner in order to give Krissa

the individual attention she so desperately needed. Krissa worked hard and they both saw improvements. However, Annette was still looking for connections to others.

Soon after, Annette learned about Parent to Parent of Georgia’s Navigator Project. The Navigator Project is a network of volunteer parents that offers support services in a variety of ways throughout the state at no cost to families. Annette signed Krissa up for the “Little Miss Challenger” Beauty Pageant, a noncompetitive family friendly event designed to reward all participants. “They’re a part of a team. I want other parents to feel as comfortable bringing their kids to these events as we do...My daughter loves it!”

Annette Hernandez went on to become a “Local Guide” for her Navigator Team and a “Supporting Parent”, which are services offered by Parent to Parent of Georgia. Local Guides offer information specific to a regional area that may be of interest to other parents whose children are impacted by disabilities and special healthcare needs.

“It’s a great honor working with P2P. I love to be able to help people who are in situations like myself who simply don’t know.”

To learn how you can become more involved, email David Blanchard at dave@p2pga.org