

Social Stories

The journey to understanding

Johnny & Kai

A Father's perspective

When Kai was a baby, I remember watching him stare at the light coming through the curtains. He could sit for ages, quietly focused. I thought, "He sees something I don't."

As Kai got older, I noticed some things were different. He didn't always respond when I called his name. He didn't follow when I pointed to something interesting. He wasn't talking like other kids his age. But he was clever in his own ways curious, observant, and full of potential.

At first, I worried. Was I doing something wrong? Was he okay?

We spoke to some professionals. They noticed the same things. But instead of doing an autism assessment, they said: "Let's watch and wait. He's still very young. Let's see how he develops."

That was hard to hear. Waiting felt like doing nothing and I didn't want to do nothing.

So I started learning. I read everything I could about autism especially from autistic adults themselves. They helped me see the world through Kai's eyes. I joined support groups. I connected with other parents who understood. I asked questions, listened, cried sometimes. I began to understand that being different doesn't mean being broken.

I started trying new ways to support Kai. We built routines that made him feel safe. I followed his interests even if they were things I didn't understand at first. I stopped worrying so much about milestones, and focused on connection.

I'm still learning. Every day. But now, I see my son more clearly. I see his strengths. His ways of communicating. I see what overwhelms him and what brings him joy.

I've learned that advocating for my child starts with listening to him, and to those who've walked this path before.

