

## Hunter (Written by Hunter's Mother, Kristi)



Hunter is a 11 year old boy with Spastic Diplegia Cerebral Palsy. His condition was a result of a growth restriction in utero that went undetected. His legs have always been extremely tight so in July of 2011 we decided to have a Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy surgery performed on him. The SDR involves opening the vertebrae and severing the errant nerve pathways that cause his spasticity. We knew we would be taking away most of his function by doing this, but it would give him the opportunity to learn new brain pathways and a new way of walking. This new way of walking could help prevent the damage to his bones, ligaments and other tissues that his former gait pattern was causing. The big thing about SDR is that it's not the surgery that's the "miracle cure", but the therapy you do afterwards. They [doctors] have you commit to 1 hour, 5 days a week but for Hunter that wasn't enough time for him to relearn to do anything properly. After surgery, Hunter had to learn how to do everything again that his spasticity used to do, including sitting up! So Conductive Education was the answer we found and we are SO fortunate to have this center.

CFCE works with Hunter daily on how and where to put his body in order to gain a more functional, typical, gait pattern. They strengthen and lengthen his muscles with their one of-a-kind program in addition to teaching age-appropriate school concepts and life skills like writing, tooth brushing and dressing. This program is the only one to evaluate and treat the child as a whole and the results show that. You can do OT or PT, but neither discipline takes into account the child's whole body. Conductive Education takes it all into consideration and the product is a boy who is stronger and more confident than I ever imagined. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who makes this program possible for us!

