

Madison (written by her father, Bill)

Madison was born along with her triplet siblings in the Fall of 2007. Her premature birth at only 29 weeks was necessitated when doctors detected the presence of an in-utero E.coli infection. Unfortunately, Madison contracted E.coli meningitis which precipitated grade IV interventricular hemorrhaging. As a result of hemorrhages, Madison sustained significant, permanent brain damage which in turn started a cascade of related issues. Less than a month had passed when it became clear that Madison had also developed hydrocephalus which would require shunting. Her first catheter was placed before she was three months old and by the time she was four years of age, she would have 5 permanent catheters and be the veteran of 26 neurosurgical procedures.



The result of the trauma for Madison was significant cognitive, visual, and fine and gross motor impairments. We immediately engaged all of the available resources for therapy, including occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, vision therapy and music therapy. And much to our delight, Madison repeatedly surprised us with her development and level of achievement. However, there was one key area where Madison was not showing encouraging progress. By age three, she was still not able to walk.

Madison demonstrated various physical abilities, but was unable and unwilling to put them all together for mobility. Even by age three, her longest walk was a single step. We heard about a new program from an organization called the Center for Conductive Education that had some very positive word-of-mouth reviews. CFCE was having a two week, full day winter break camp, and even though it meant driving Madison to Loveland every day, we thought it was worth a shot. Our expectations were for Madison to develop greater core strength so we could push her to a second step. So you can imagine our surprise when at pick up on the first day, she walked across the room to meet us.

The only way to describe the shock and disbelief would be if a friend casually mentioned, “hey, I learned to fly” and then did. CFCE didn’t perform a miracle, but what they did do was to implement an entirely different approach that just clicked for Madison. And by the time camp ended, our problem went from “I wonder if Madison will ever walk?” to “Has anyone seen Madison?”.

Since then, we have enrolled Madison in additional CFCE summer and winter camps, plus individual therapy after school for work in a variety of areas including greater personal mobility, gait, and fine motor skills. Every day, Madison benefits from the therapies she received from CFCE, and today she enjoys a level of independence that allows her to move freely around her home, school and the everyday events of life. She’s come so far since her days of a single step.