



Hi,

This has been such a busy accomplishing summer for _____ . I am excited to share her successes with you as we begin this next school year. She has been to the high school with her sister to tour it and is excited to be in high school but tells me she is still “a bit nervous”

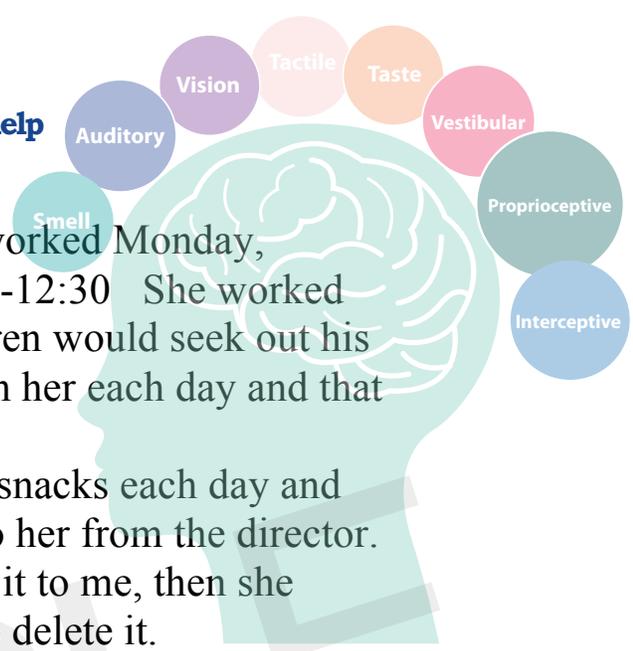
We have been cooking this summer; dinner for her Dad as well as cakes and cupcakes. She loves to cook. She and I use a cookbook and pick what to make, she gets the items ready. If needed, we shop to get the items.

She is getting better on measuring. She reads the recipe one time over then we follow it step by step. Sometimes she jumps ahead of steps. She cuts fairly well, but she cut herself once this spring so she is reticent to cut things. She stirs well with the statement “use strong arms”. She knows how to set and follow the timer. To have her so something delicate, I use the words “gentle hands”.

_____ has been doing wonderful things for her therapist from gymsters. Elizabeth is practicing riding her bike and is very comfortable on it and not afraid. She is very proud of herself. She and I have been powerwalking 3-4 times a week, which is a favorite activity of hers. She walks between 2-4 miles. Ms. O’Hara is the volleyball coach for Middle School, each year she has Elizabeth help her. On those days, Elizabeth will be taking a snack to eat before the practice. She told me she will keep her snack in her purse. I am told practice day is Tuesday. She also volunteered for Vacation Bible School and helped with the 3 and 4 year olds. She loved it and I am told she did very well.

The most exciting wonderful part of her summer was her involvement as a counselor in training or CIT at the YMCA.

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This experience was amazing for her. She worked Monday, Tuesday and Thursday of each week from 8-12:30. She worked with the 6 and 7 year olds. One of the children would seek out his buddy each day, hold her hand and stay with her each day and that was our child! She loved this.

She packed and unpacked her own bag and snacks each day and managed the text messages that were sent to her from the director. She would check her texts, bring it up, read it to me, then she would decide to act on it or if it was okay to delete it.

So much of what she learned was independence and confidence in her ability to do things and think things out for herself.

We would talk about each day and if there was something that she seemed unsure of, we would talk through a solution, or problem solve something. She gains a great deal from simple talking and problem solving. The wonderful thing I saw was that once we talked it through, she remembered it and was able to use the solution herself.

She had responsibilities to help watch the children in the pool, at craft time, learning time as well as help with snacks.

In the process, she made two wonderful friends in two 16 year olds from Boardman. They have plans to stay in touch through out the year. These friendships mean a great deal to our daughter and she values that she was treated as the typical teenager that she really is. Her disorders played a small part in this summer; she really had very minimal support each day. This was part of what made summer so great!!!

Her gains this summer make me so excited for the next step of her life, which high school. I am proud of her accomplishments and know that her desire to succeed is coming from her own desire to grow and achieve.

It is so important for this next step of her life to fit where she is at the start of this school year.

We just had a meeting with our therapist, Mary. We see her once a year. Mary has been the cornerstone of her success ever since she was 2 years old.



Our meeting with Mary was quite wonderful, as she sees in our daughter the same desire for independence and the want of her to take ownership of her days.

Due to her dyspraxia, it takes time to answer questions and at times will wait for someone to help her retrieve the information asked. I have usually been the one to help her by feeding to her the question needed to spark a thought. But in the meeting with Mary, I learned that I need to step back and allow her the time needed to think, perhaps reword the original question, but not to do more. So one of the biggest things we are working on is the time for her to answer, and that she was asked if she could say “I have dyspraxia, please give me a moment to answer” She likes to say this as it gives the reason she needs time a name.

I thank you for using these tools with her as you start the year. This way we all begin the year on the same page. When we meet to adjust the IEP in September, I will bring you a copy of the notes from our meeting with Mary.

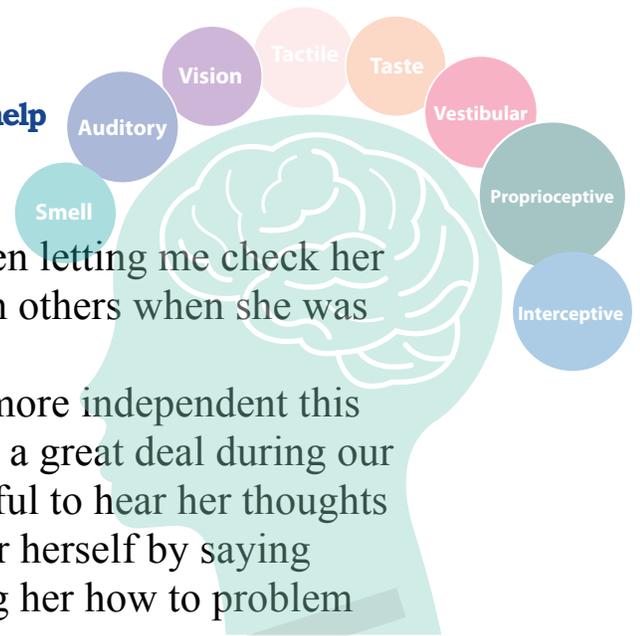
SCHOOL WORK

We accomplished “word of the day”, journal writing in a notebook as well as on the computer. She still likes to type with one hand but will use two when I tell her to “do it like her OT told you to”. She practiced adding with a carryover and did well.

She has been reading a lot this summer and loves it. She and I have been working on learning to look words up alphabetically, to help with her OWA work in the day. She was to find the word, write the page number and a definition. She succeeded by using a dictionary with larger print, she struggled a lot when the print was smaller.

I went over synonyms, antonyms and homonyms with her, which was fun.

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I also encouraged her to work alone and then letting me check her work. This was successful some days and on others when she was tired, or stressed, it did not.

I am trying to have homework/studying be more independent this year. We did many social stories and talked a great deal during our chat times each night together. It is wonderful to hear her thoughts each night. I am encouraging her to think for herself by saying “what should YOU do” as opposed to telling her how to problem solve things.

I will bring in snacks for her to have in her box in your room. I told her to tell you when she needed to eat. She will appear angry or lose focus when she is hungry.

This has been such an amazing summer, and I want to thank you for your time in the spring to talk as well as listen to our thoughts and concerns.

I also want to thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I am hopeful that by knowing what she did all summer (her successes as well as our new plans from Mary) that this will help her continue to grow. We want high school to be that next “positive and exciting” step on her journey.