



Community Celebrates 'No Moore Chemo' for Boy with Autism, Down Syndrome

Featured Article

Community Celebrates "No Moore Chemo"

DD Renews Membership with SELN

A Positive Step to Enhance Skill Set of Support Staff

Work Continues on Recommendations

Sunday, March 10, 2013 might have been just another average day for you but it meant the world to our family. On that day, our family, friends and community celebrated with a "No Moore Chemo" party for my son, Jacob. Jacob is 13 years old with Down syndrome and autism. At the young age of 9, he was diagnosed with leukemia. He spent the next 3 1/2 yrs battling cancer and winning against all odds!

We are very blessed to have the COMP home and community-based disability waiver for Jacob. I know during our annual ISP (Individual Service Plan) meetings we discuss goals, objectives, services and resources for Jacob. So what is the goal of the COMP waiver? To have more support in various ways in Jacob's home and community environment. As I reflect on this amazing night in March, it dawned on me that this is what the COMP waiver is all about — having family, friends and community support Jacob. That party represented a huge "ISP meeting" where all the people that love and support Jacob (and our family) were present. It was not paid for by the waiver but by the many "angels" in our lives that helped us through one of the most difficult journeys a family could face — a child with cancer and developmental disabilities!

More than 350 people came out to celebrate the end of Jacob's chemotherapy treatment that day in March, including all the amazing people that supported us in this journey. Santa Lou and Ms. Clause, Monkey Joe and the Heroes' Alliance superheroes were there to entertain the kids. We had DJs so we could dance, friends provided professional photography, Icing Smiles Foundation donated an amazing Mickey and Friends cake, California Pizza Kitchen donated more than 30 pizzas and salads, Monkey Joe's of Roswell provided the amazing facility and so many more people donated their time, energy and talents to bringing this party together.

Senator John Albers even read a proclamation that made Sunday, March 10, 2013 "Jacob Moore Day" in Georgia. But the highlight of the night was releasing more than 250 "No Moore Chemo" balloons as we honored the children that cancer had taken who are now in heaven. It was also a statement that more needs to be done to raise money and awareness for pediatric cancer research. (Note: the balloons were biodegradable of course!).



Senator John Albers (with Jacob & Heidi) proclaims March 10, 2013 as "Jacob Moore Day" in Georgia. To view the official Jacob Moore Resolution from Senator Albers, click on <http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/20132014/133410.pdf>.



Jacob Moore's "No Moore Chemo" party. More than 350 people were in attendance.



More than 250 "No Moore Chemo" balloons were released in honor of those who are now in heaven and the need for more pediatric cancer research.

That night, I was able to witness the real impact of these waivers. They aren't just about the services that they provide to Jacob, they also allow him to give back, too. I was able to see all of the ways his presence benefits the community around him. I saw the love and joy that he is able to bring to the people around him and that is the real value of these waivers. That's why these waivers are so important to individuals with disabilities and their families. The waivers allow individuals the opportunity to develop skills and be in the community so in turn the community can be educated and help them in their journey as well. What an amazing opportunity for everyone involved!

Here is the link to the 15-minute video tribute we showed at the "No Moore Chemo" party, dedicated to all the "angels" in our life that helped us through a very difficult journey.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecNle5dSUcQ&feature=youtu.be>

Thanks for all of those individuals and organizations that support individuals with disabilities in so many ways!

— Heidi J. Moore

Heidi is the proud mother to 13-year-old Jacob, who has Down syndrome, autism and is a cancer survivor and 11-year-old Jared, who has an amazing spirit and love for individuals with disabilities and cancer.

Heidi serves on the DBHDD Advisory Council for Developmental Disabilities.