

Ayden's Story

I would like to share with you how Scouting has made an impact on our family and say thank you to all of the people in Ayden's Cub Scout pack that have made these last 6 months the most memorable of our lives!



My son Ayden suffers from autism. He does not suffer some of the not so fun side effects that this disorder has to offer but still has many struggles. The last 4 years of school have been a nightmare—not only for Ayden but for our family also. Ayden hadn't been making friends. He was not involving himself in any after school activities. We were never getting invites to birthday parties. My son is almost 10 years old and he has yet to be invited to a play date! He can't function in social situations. Being in a situation where there are a lot of people, noises, smells, stimulation prove way too much for Ayden. We have tried church groups (he made it 15 minutes before being asked to leave...can you imagine the horror I felt when the youth group leader of the church asked me not to let my son attend youth group...THIS WAS AT A CHURCH!!!). We tried little league. I think that lasted not even through the try outs. We tried summer camps and didn't get through the first day.

When he brought home the flyer for cub scouts my reaction was "oh great just one more thing that we can sign up for and be asked to not return to." Well the first meeting came and went without incident... Suddenly a month passed and Ayden was counting down the days until it was Tuesday! He couldn't wait to go to Scouts! Tuesday couldn't get here fast enough. Now let me remind you that Ayden DOESNT GET EXCITED ABOUT ANYTHING! And suddenly he is counting down the days until he can go to Scouts? I was baffled!

Scouts has proved to be so much more than an after school activity for our family! It has become a way of life! Ayden used to have major anger issues where he would lash out and hit or fight anyone that told him no or that wouldn't allow him to do whatever it was that he wanted to do. He was getting restrained in school at least 3 and 4 times a day, every day. He was getting suspended almost weekly and he was beating up his little brother daily. He was being defiant to both his father and me! He was out of control.

Since he started Scouts, all of that has changed! He just got rewarded at school for going 3 months without having an incident! THAT IS HUGE! He isn't beating up his little brother anymore. He is respecting his father and me; it's been an amazing transformation. I asked him

the other day why he thinks he has changed so much in the last couple of months. Was it because his medicine is finally starting to work? Did his therapist come up with some new kind of magic treatment? His answer, "Mom I'm a Boy Scout! I have to act like a Boy Scout now!" I was amazed!

Ayden has always been a come home from school and plop down in front of the TV kind of kid. Not anymore. Now he comes home from school, and cracks open the Cub Scout book (OUR FAMILY'S NEW BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION MANUAL) to see what badge he can work on today! He has completely changed his way of life and his behavior to be that of a true "Boy Scout." He spends hours a day looking at his Cub Scout book or a Boys' Life magazine! Scouts has truly been the best thing that could have ever happened to our family and to my son!

I truly believe that because of Scouts, Ayden gets a chance to be a happy, productive 9-year old little boy! He has friends for the first time. He is putting himself in situations that he would have never let himself be put in before! Scouts has taught him how to be a productive member of society. It has taught him how to get through situations that make him uncomfortable. And instead of just giving up and saying I can't do it to try his hardest and give it his all, and then at least if he isn't able to do it at least he knows that he tried his hardest.

At the scout camp I sat in a chair and watched my son surrounded by at least 9 other boys and they were all talking to him and playing with him and then Ayden did something I haven't seen in so long...he smiled!

It was a real genuine happy smile!

I prayed that I would one day see a smile like that and because of Scouts I get to see that smile all of the time!

Thank you to all of the people that have made scouts possible this year! You have all truly made this year one that Ayden will never forget!

Thank You Cub Scouts for bringing back my little boys confidence, self-esteem, and smile! We are already counting down the time to the next Scouting event.

Jamie Hubiak