



Parent Perspective - Ryder's Journey

Mim, Mother of Ryder

When Ryder was about 15 months old we started to notice things that he wasn't doing that other children were doing like pointing, clapping, and waving. I started to look into things and was concerned so I made an appointment with a couple of paediatricians. They confirmed my suspicions that he had autism. So at that stage my life was just a big rollercoaster, I was reading and doing as much research as I could to find out the best things for him and obviously speech therapy was a top priority.

He started speech therapy at 17 months and we started with a lot of playing, mostly on the floor, he was good at understanding, I knew that he could understand what we were saying but he couldn't say a single word, he didn't babble, he didn't point, he did start to actually point at about 19 months. So then we could understand what he understood.

We basically just sat on the ground and tried to make him say things, tried to make him use his vocab as much as we could even though he wasn't verbalising at all we just tried to get the movement of the mouth (using physical prompting).

Now Ryder is almost 5 and he has come such a long way. At three and a half he said his first word which was egg. Then slowly slowly he was starting to say single words which was the most amazing thing ever because we honestly didn't think that he was ever going to speak.

Once he knew that he could speak it just made it easier for him to try harder and we tried harder, everyone just tried and from when he was 17 months to now, there is such a big difference. Now, he is social, he can make eye contact, he can have a conversation, he understands that he needs to look at you, although sometimes he still needs reminding. He has just come such a long way, it's just amazing.

*** This is an approximate transcription only; minor modifications have been made to assist the reader.*