

Defying the Odds: A Superhero Story

Lashone watched as her 5-year-old-son, DaQuan, played with superhero figures in the family's living room. What really makes a superhero? She thought. Most of the stories she knew were about ordinary people who had pushed through adversity to accomplish extraordinary things. And in the end, they had persevered. In a way, DaQuan's story matched that of the legends surrounding the small toys. The path that had led to DaQuan's success had certainly not been easy.



DaQuan practicing his transitional skills.

Lashone thought back to six years ago, when it all began. During her pregnancy, Lashone had learned her baby had a brain disorder and likely wouldn't survive. She spent nights pacing, worrying about his future. One night, Lashone was scouring information, searching for anything that could give her hope. The words Help Me Grow

from Help Me Grow. Megan had been working with Lashone since her pregnancy, helping her understand how she could best support her son's development. At first, it had been hard when DaQuan was not able to talk the way other children did at his age. But Megan showed Lashone ways to help build up DaQuan's verbal skills, and he was slowly getting better at communicating. Now, as Megan smiled back she asked "Who's got you?" to the small boy. "Mama!" DaQuan exclaimed happily. Lashone beamed. She was still thrilled every time her son said her name.

come. But she also knew DaQuan still needed help learning how to transition in a new school. Because OhioGuidestone had been a cornerstone in DaQuan's life since birth, it was only natural that the agency would continue to help him.

"What kind of game are we playing today?" Lashone asked when she visited DaQuan's kindergarten classroom. "Memory! I'm winning!" DaQuan said. Lashone laughed and looked at Erin, Daquan's therapist from OhioGuidestone's Early Childhood Mental Health

Program. Just weeks ago, DaQuan was barely interacting with her during these sessions. Now, he was talking and laughing not only with Erin, but with

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his teachers and classmates. "I can't believe it," Lashone said. "After everything he's been through, he's just like a typical five year old boy." Erin smiled. "I think he has a long, successful future ahead of him," she said.



DaQuan and his therapist, Erin.

jumped out from a colorful flyer and caught her eye. She had called for information the very next day.

Lashone smiled as she opened the door for Megan, DaQuan's home visitor

As time went on, DaQuan continued to develop and soon was able to start preschool. There, he worked with OhioGuidestone's classroom intervention program to learn how to interact with other children. When it was time for DaQuan to go to kindergarten, Lashone was proud of how far he had

Lashone's eyes began to water at the memories as she continued to watch her son play with his action figures. My little superhero, she thought. She knew that DaQuan would have different needs as he grew up. But she also knew that OhioGuidestone would be there to help every step of the way.