



A Real Boy: A True Story of Autism, Early Intervention, and Recovery

By Christina Adams

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Jonah Adams was diagnosed as autistic at two years and eight months. Just a few years later, a doctor refused to believe such a diagnosis could ever have been given to this healthy, happy boy. This is the true story of how Jonah's mother, Christina, seized his limited window of opportunity for recovery. Detailing how she utilized a combination of a special diet and one-on-one tutoring with speech therapists and behavioral psychologists, Christina shares the entire journey she undertook to give her child a second chance at a full life.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Adams's son, Jonah, was two years and eight months old when he was diagnosed as autistic. Eighteen months later, child development specialists evaluating Jonah couldn't believe he'd had a history of autism. What made the difference? Adams—with the help of her lawyer husband—devoted herself completely to Jonah's treatment, starting immediately with a rigorous gluten and casein-free diet. They enrolled the young boy in a 40-hour a week, one-on-one ABA ("applied behavioral analysis") program for autistic children, supplemented with individual speech therapy and physical therapy. Jonah also took various drugs to reduce perseverative behavior and overall anxiety. Adams, a self-described "Autism Mommy," worked full-time on the intervention process, advocating for Jonah's needs with the school system so they'd cover his high bills, cooking Jonah's special foods and interfacing with each therapist privately and then collectively to help Jonah integrate the lessons into real-world situations. It's pleasing to see Jonah make such a dramatic improvement, although some readers may feel uneasy at how quickly this two-year-old was labeled autistic, or feel disturbed by the intensity of his treatment plan. With the number of children on the autism spectrum growing, Adams's upbeat, inspirational account has a ready-made market—at least with other autism "super parents." *Agent, Marcy Posner. (May 3)*

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From Booklist

When Adams' son, Jonah, at just over two-and-a-half, was diagnosed with autism, she was told that time was of the essence. Early, aggressive intervention would provide his only chance at realizing any semblance of a normal life. Luckily, she and husband Jack had the energy, time, and resources to spring into action. Thus, before his third birthday Jonah had a posse attending his every need. The family had consulted a battery of doctors, therapists, teachers, psychologists, and counselors. They had connected with other parents of children diagnosed with ASD (autism spectrum disorder), radically changed Jonah's diet, and set up a 40-hours-per-week learning regimen; and they were devoting nearly every waking, nonworking hour to Jonah's development. The Herculean effort resulted in Jonah's recovery--though, Adams notes, the line demarcating recovery from autism wavers like smoke--and proved that if it takes a village to raise a child, it can take an army to raise a child with autism. Adams' openness about the exhaustive schedule, self-blame, and frequent setbacks involved makes compelling reading. *Donna Chavez*

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Review

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a"Press-Telegram" (Long Beach, CA)

aAn upbeat, inspirational account.a a"Publishers Weekly"

aClearly reveals how parental determination can enable a child to grow and prosper.a

aStephen Shore, author of "Beyond the Wall"

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Maria Hernandez:

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Wilma Shay:

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