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Letter to the Editor

Haworth Editorial Submission

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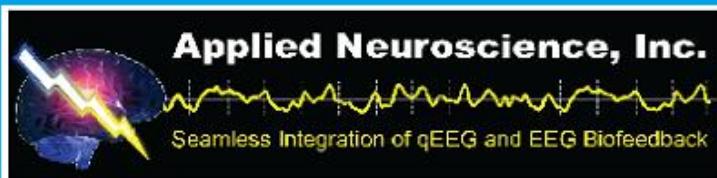
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Letter to the Editor

The Davis family sends this letter entitled *Ready for Timothy* describing their journey with their son and sibling. They hope that their contribution helps to further educate other families in need!

Timothy Mark Davis was born July, 21, 1985, into a home almost larger than life and resounding with order. He was the ninth of ten musical, and gifted, children. As a point of survival, in order to accommodate ten pianists, singers, athletes, actresses, and instrumentalists galore, his home was on a tight and peaceful schedule. Life for Tim was full of love and relatively conflict free; and as one can well imagine, full of care-givers. Everyone clamored to take care of Tim.

Avoiding great detail here, Tim was different from the second day home. His mother thought him hearing impaired as he responded so differently to noise stimulation—the first of many incorrect diagnoses. The order in his home, however, was a terrific blessing. As a matter of safety, his family simply couldn't let go of the crawling, toddling, walking Timothy. He was out-of-control. Tim was incredibly enthusiastic, but unbelievably unique. He could not speak clearly, but could hum and sing entire songs. He used this technique to communicate his needs and wishes to his family. He could only be taught by "not teaching" him. Later, in the school setting, the teachers would help Tim by teaching a concept to the child next to him rather than addressing him directly. And, through it all, Tim was behaviorally unmanageable.

Tragically, and in spite of all of his family's best efforts to avoid it, Tim began to realize his short-comings and his pretty child-smile faded and appeared only rarely. And so, the desperate time-fighting search, mirrored by so many other families in similar situations, began. He amassed medical files several inches thick as the medical profession repeatedly tested his hearing and speech. He suffered through neurological and psychological testing. Several expensive brain evaluations were executed. As he entered school, educational interventions took the place of school-time fun. Throughout this course of time, dozens of medications with a variety of doses were tried on sweet Tim who was fading ever farther away. Tim's family were all knocking on Tim's door, but he couldn't let us in! As he began to speak, he said, "Children are sweet, not me, I'm bad."

Tim's ray of hope first appeared by way of a teacher's aide in 1991 who found an article on biofeedback training being conducted by Dr. Joel Lubar in Tennessee. This led to Dr. Steven Stockdale and conversations with him seemed promising—was there really a healthy future for Tim? As Tim was a bit young at the time for the treatment, his family began a three year decathlon—every member running, jumping, whatever it took, and still Tim faded slowly away behind eyes veiled with pain of soul.

Again a ray of hope appeared, this time a special documentary by Connie Chung on CBS about the Drake Institute in California—this story was a life-jacket thrown to Tim's drowning family, which was snatched with vigor and desperate hope! By way of referral, Tim began seeing Dr. Thomas Brownback in Allentown, PA. The situation had become so desperate that the same week he had his brain mapped to determine eligibility for the program, arrangements were being made for him to be withdrawn from third grade. The school setting seemed only to position Tim for ongoing failure. In addition, a psychological review by the local Health Maintenance Organization revealed that Tim could only hope for a "skills-type" future at best. What a week! The brain mapping revealed a mind so totally out of synchronism that he fell into the

99.999999th percentile of the profoundly disabled. Only the love and support and repetition of his family had allowed him to progress as far as he had. TREATMENTS WOULD BEGIN IMMEDIATELY.

Tim's family refinanced their home and with a car with 200,000+ miles, they started the three-day-a-week trek to Allentown. The trip was three hours there, three hours back, with an hour of therapy sandwiched in between. His high school big sisters were given permission by the high school to rotate turns home with the tenth little Davis, mom quit working, started driving, and everyone began to pray. If Tim's family had been in the decathlon before, they were really in the supreme track event of their lives now. Everyone had their cleats on!

After four years of public education without a single day devoid of aggressive or inappropriate behavior, could anything really help!?! But, after the second treatment, Tim had three good days in a row—unheard of! That was in October, 1994, and not an aggressive day since. Tim's family held their breath and sure enough, Tim was born. His body had been here for 8 years, but his soul just now emerged. He is kind, understanding, cooperative. He has dramatically increased scholastic comprehension and he has made some real friendships. His family has been amazed to watch and record the steady elimination of 30 to 40 identified severe behaviors. His remapped brain is now in the normal range—there is a God in heaven, he does answer prayers, and those involved with biofeedback therapy and its inception are both gifted and inspired. Tim's family was ready for him all along and, yes, now he's finally arrived!!!



Sincerely,

Bob, Linda, Matt, Connie, Abby, Ginny, Katie, Jackie, Candy, Cassie, and Elizabeth (Tim's family!)