

Technology Helps My Son with Autism

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My Journey Started

As a parent of a special kid, technology has been helpful for me. At first, when they said my child had autism, everything was new for me and my family. I didn't even know what autism was. So, that's how my journey started.

I used the internet to learn more about autism. I wanted to find out how I could help my child. I looked for what insurance my son should have. I looked for what school he should attend. I keep using technology to learn what is best for my son. These questions never end. Every day, there is something new to learn.

My Son Is Nonverbal

Now I know that autism is a *disability*. It affects my son's brain. In my son's case, he cannot talk. Thanks to technology, there are apps that help him. Now he can identify numbers, shapes, and places. He can "talk" by using a tablet and touching a picture on the screen. With these pictures, he can build a sentence to say what he needs.

An App Gives My Son a Voice

We use an app called Proloquo2go. He started learning how to use it in speech therapy. This app gives my son a voice. He can be more *independent*. For example, I show him a *schedule* on his tablet. There is a list of what he needs to do that day. He needs to brush his teeth, take a shower, get dressed, and take out the trash. This

schedule has a picture of each step that he needs to follow.

It is hard to use words to tell my son what to do. It is easier for him to follow the picture steps on the tablet. They tell him what he should be doing now and what is coming next. This helps him have better focus. He has more success! Then he can point to a picture of a candy for a *reward*. I tell him, "If you want this candy, go and put on your shoes. Then you can have the candy."

Other Technology Keeps My Son Safe

Technology has also helped with my son's safety. I have cameras that "ping" my phone if someone enters or leaves my house. I also get *notified* if he opens the door of his room. He is very fast, and I have to make sure he does not go outside by himself. That is dangerous for him. The cameras help me keep him safe.

Having a special son has been a blessing in my family. Technology helps us grow as a family and helps my son live a full life.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. Read the article on the next page. What do these parents have in common? What is different? Be specific.
2. Look up the words in *bold italics* or try to figure out their meaning from the context.

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