

Math Genius

Elwood Green

BEFORE YOU READ: What does it mean to be a *genius* at something? Look up the definition of autism spectrum disorder or read the definitions on pp. 12-13.

Good Programs Have Helped Me

I like having autism. I have *genius* math skills. If somebody tells me a date years ago, I can tell them what day of the week it was. Even though I am good at math, I have a hard time staying on a budget. I need help for that and other things.

I have attended many good programs that help me. According to the CDC, there are 75 million people in the world with ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder). Many of them have missed out on good programs.

One good program for me is Literacy Chicago. I go to school four days a week. I am learning to read and write. My church supports me to reach my goals. My Pastor told me that the church will give me a free car. I have my license, and I know how to drive. I am waiting for my car.

Communication Is Hard

I have a hard time communicating. Many people with autism do not have good social skills. Bad people will scam people with autism. They will act like jerks and try to take all our money. We need to be careful.

I Like Being with My Family

I was in foster care until I was 18 years old. My foster parent was not nice. We did not get along. She didn't help me. When I was in foster care, I went to my mom and dad's home every weekend. They took me camping, and we went fishing on a boat. I had a negative experience in my foster home. I loved being with my parents on the weekends.



After I turned 18, I started living with my mom and dad every day. I'm so happy that I live with them every day. One day, we went to Six Flags. I went on a rollercoaster. I screamed, but I liked it. My family did a lot of fun things that day. Some people with autism might have a harder time on a rollercoaster.

I have real family memories. Not everyone with autism can be with their families. I am lucky to be able to be with my family.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. What are some of the support systems Elwood has in his life? Which ones have worked well and which ones have not worked well for him?
2. According to Elwood, what are the gifts and challenges of having autism?
3. Do the writing activity in the box on p. 17.

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