

I don't quite know how to put in words how to describe what Tuesday's Child has done for our family. But I will try.

I was definitely reluctant at the beginning. I wasn't sure all the praise was going to be a good thing. Not that I didn't want to praise Owen, but It just didn't seem sustainable moving forward. With Ann's encouragement, and positive attitude, I gave it a shot. It took a week to get on board, but man I'm glad I did.

Initially, it was a rocky start. Owen took FULL advantage of all the praise, and even became feistier when he wasn't getting it. Then we turned a corner, and he began seeking the positive praise. He started behaving in a way, so he'd get the praise. When I wasn't quick enough to point it out, he'd point it out. He also started praising me. Telling me I was doing a good job drinking my coffee, tell me I was doing a good job walking, driving, cooking ... He really got into it. And so did I!

Once we realized how much he LOVED the praise, we decided to tackle what I think was the root of the problem. Eating. Owen has a hate/hate relationship with food, and very limited allowable foods. He simply was not getting enough energy to function, which was leading to his "meltdown" behaviors. Getting food in his body has been our biggest challenge.

I am happy to report, Owen is now a member of the clean plate club. Actually, just 2 nights ago he was eating so fast, he was shoving his food in his mouth. Not just food, but NEW food. Healthy, whole grain food! It was one of those moments I wasn't sure I wanted to interrupt to praise ... His smile was priceless as he was saying yummy.

As for the family dynamic, wow, what a change. Everyone is just a little calmer. Everyone is having a little more fun, and enjoying each other a bit more. A few days ago Owen shoved a raisin up his nose. After calling my mother, a former nurse for advice, I was able to get the raisin out. After the ordeal I found myself fighting tears. Not because he was hurt, or in any real danger, but because I could handle it, on my own, without breaking down. The raisin up his nose was the only challenge at the moment, not one of 10! It was at that moment I realized just what a huge change our household has gone through. We're no longer navigating crisis after crisis with meltdown after meltdown. The little things are little things, and now we're able to tackle the big things.

Roger, my older son, and Owen are getting along great. There is quite an age gap, so it's not a given they would be friends. However, they are best friends. They hold hands, they play together, they scheme together (usually with the desired outcome to scare me or drive me "bonkers" as Roger puts it). There are moments when Owen's age and development level puts a damper on the fun, however for the most part everyone is truly enjoying each other.

As we prepare for our move across country, I can't help but think about the invaluable service Tuesday's Child has done our family. With all the changes and stress we are going through, I can't imagine what it would be like to tackle this life change without the tools we gained at Tuesday's Child.

A word about my coach Ann. She really seemed to be a perfect match for me. In the beginning, when I wasn't 100% on board she was really good at helping me understand the bigger picture. Also, her sharing of her own experiences, and how she has handled similar situations really helped me understand the importance of staying calm. There were several moments when I would channel her calmness. I would actually say in my head "what would Ann do?" Not only was it a tremendous asset to have someone to talk through the not so great moments with, it was wee to have a champion in my corner during the good times.

To sum it up, I am thankful for Tuesday's Child. I truly feel like our family is on a path to success. The whole family has benefitted from the program, and moving forward we can navigate the good and the bad together.

Thank You,

Liz