

My name is Becky Stark, this is my son Adam Trevino. Adam is 40 years old and we are from Stark County, Ohio. Adam has lived at GentleBrook's Meadows intermediate care facility in Hartville Ohio for one year. We moved to Ohio from Florida after living there 15 years when we found GentleBrook. Some people thought we were crazy, but for Adam and our family it was the best decision we could have ever made.

Adam was born with cerebral palsy and is non-verbal. He was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes 25 years ago. Adam's care is complicated by the fact that he's been a diabetic since he was a teenager and is dependent on several daily insulin injections. His glucose levels fluctuate and need to be monitored regularly. Due to his cerebral palsy he can't check his own glucose levels and needs 24/7 medical supervision. Adam has a seizure disorder and several other medical conditions. A group home setting would not and could not meet Adam's medical needs.

In October 2017, I visited my family in Stark County my sister told me about the GentleBrook Front Porch Café and Store in Hartville. We went there to shop and have lunch. Individuals with DD who are involved in GentleBrook's programming work in the Café, Store, a Greenhouse, and a Sports Complex. The community frequents these facilities. I saw information there about GentleBrook's intermediate care facilities. Don and I brought Adam to visit the Meadows later that year and we were very impressed with the facility, the caregivers, the activities and work options that were available. Within 6 months we had sold our Florida home, quit our jobs and moved to Ohio.

Adam works 5 days a week at the GentleBrook workshop, doing sanding and staining of wood products, shredding paper and occasionally he works at the GentleBrook Greenhouse. He gets a little paycheck and he uses that money to purchase a Sunday Newspaper, pop from the vending machine and \$1 for church offering. He loves getting those checks and knowing that it's his money and he earned it. He also helps at the Meadows by setting the table for dinner and bringing meals from the kitchen. Adam loves anything to do with paperwork. He spends a lot of time working on his version of the staff scheduling. He types names, dates, times and shifts. The staff at the Meadows not only encourage him to help they praise his work when it is completed. This gives his self-esteem a huge boost.

Even though Adam is non-verbal he can communicate. He sends me messages daily on Facebook messenger. Topics range from the Indians Score and schedule to weekend plans and fast food requests. One message that I get several times a week goes like this "NO MOVE FLORIDA" "YES OHIO LIKE!" His life here is very full and busy. He is happy and healthy. These things are what we all want for our adult children whether they are disabled or not.

We have seen other families who wait too long to make this transition for their adult child with developmental disabilities to find a residential option that works. We know parents in their eighties and still have adult children who are in their sixties living with them. We knew that at one point there would be a transition for Adam, and we wanted to make it as easy on him as possible. We chose to be proactive so that we could help all involved with the transition. Ohio is a special place that it honors the full continuum of care. Having lived in Michigan and Florida, I am grateful that Adam now has Ohio to call home.

We know that Gentle Brook's ICF is exactly the right place for Adam. Because of his diabetes, Adam needs ongoing nursing care and the family atmosphere at the Meadows is the place that meets all of our needs. We're thankful that the staff at GentleBrook treat Adam and the other residents with respect

and like family, because we know we're not going to be here forever. There's great comfort for Don and I knowing that Adam will be well cared for even when we're not around.