

In 2013, my twin sons Landon and Logan, were diagnosed with autism. Autism for us means severe learning and speech delays, extreme hyperactivity and anxiety, sleeplessness, and self-injurious and aggressive behaviors. In 2016, both boys were diagnosed with ADHD. My hope with this diagnosis was that there would be a treatment available to help control the hyperactivity and anxiety preventing them from sitting in their seats and learning with their peers. They have an actual IEP goal of paying attention to one thing for 3 minutes. We tried Clonidine, Ritalin, Adderall, and Strattera. All of these medications came with extreme aggression, irritability, drowsiness, sleeplessness, and loss of appetite. After completing Genesight genetic testing, it was determined that there wasn't currently an ADHD medication available that was recommended for Landon's and Logan's genetic makeup. We had nothing. Then came medical cannabis for autism and with it came hope. I had hope there might finally be a medication available for Landon and Logan that could treat all of their symptoms at one time. Month after month, year after year, I see other states passing legislation to add autism as a qualifying condition. Parents and children elsewhere are having these incredible breakthroughs and Ohio families continue to be left behind. Landon and Logan get 40 hours of ABA therapy, 2 hours of speech therapy and 30 minutes of occupational therapy a week. Bedtime medications include Zoloft, Trazadone, Benadryl, and melatonin. All these just for a few hours of broken sleep. None of it is enough to calm the storm constantly brewing within them. They are here doing the work, but we need more help. Imagine being in a meeting with a group of your child's therapists and having them tell you your son hit himself 304 times that day. Imagine watching your child have a meltdown because he can't communicate his most basic wants and needs. What if you had to watch your children suffer and there was a medication available that might fix some or even ALL of the things torturing them every minute of their lives, but you were told they can't have it because a handful of doctors in Ohio say so? What if this is the medication that allows my children to speak, to think, to count, to use the toilet and I am being told "no"? Why is it not the right of the parents and doctors who know and treat our children to decide what medication is most appropriate to treat them? Why am I being told no, just because I live in Ohio? I'm not asking, I am begging you to help us get autism added as a qualifying condition for medical cannabis so my babies, now 10 years old, can maybe finally find some peace and comfort. I am confident that eventually, it will be available to us. It's inevitable so why make them wait one more minute for the relief they deserve?