

December 2011

Meeting Street

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Nathan & Maya

Dear Friend,

Nathan loves Maya and Maya loves him back. The two met last year in *Bright Futures* at Meeting Street – our inclusive Early Childhood program. They quickly became the best of friends. Nathan and Maya would spend all day, every day together if they could.

Maya is 4 years old and joined us at Meeting Street a year ago. She has CDG (Congenital Disorders of Glycosylation), a rare genetic/metabolic disease that only 100 children in the United States have. CDG causes abnormal tissue and organ development which can affect the entire body, especially the function of the central and peripheral nervous system.

The good news is that since coming to Meeting Street, Maya communicates much more than she ever did and what she says is much easier to understand now. Her mom attributes some of this to Maya being able to be around so many children every day at school who talk to her all the time! Maya is also more aware when people are speaking with her and she understands much more of what is said.

Nathan is an adorable, upbeat and delightful 5 year old who has been benefitting from Meeting Street's philosophy of inclusion since he was just 3. Nathan has Down Syndrome, and since his arrival at Meeting Street he has progressed unbelievably. His speech has dramatically improved – and he's learning to sign. Nathan can already put two and three word sign-sentences together.

As a result of his determination and the intensive therapy he receives at Meeting Street, Nathan is able to walk up and down the stairs by himself. This seemingly simple task is a significant accomplishment for him since the open heart surgery he had as an infant left his mobility and endurance seriously compromised.

The main thing Nathan and Maya have in common is that they absolutely love being able to go to school at Meeting Street.

(over, please)

Maya is one girl who never complains about going to school. In fact, she would come to school every day if she could. She loves getting on the school bus in the morning, eager for the day to begin. The swimming pool and getting to see her friends are some of her favorite things about her school routine. Since coming to Meeting Street, Maya has made huge strides developmentally.

“When we were looking at schools, we knew Meeting Street was our number 1 choice. Many schools have inclusion through preschool or kindergarten, but at Meeting Street we know Maya will be in an inclusive setting for many years to come.”

– Catherine, Maya’s Mom

Every morning Nathan signs, **“Go play at school”** and like Maya, he asks to go to school even on weekends and vacation days. When children enjoy going to school it shows in their performance, and this is definitely apparent in Nathan. He’s learning his numbers now and is also learning to read. One of his very favorite things about coming to Meeting Street is strolling down the hallways to see people – because EVERYONE knows his name.

Nathan is proud to be able to help his friend Maya clap her hands during circle time and he loves to bring her books to look at. He **always** wants to sit next to her and hold her hand. In fact, if someone else is sitting beside her he will try to nudge his way in between them!

“Nathan would not have grown as fast as he has without the dedicated staff at Meeting Street. They understand his needs on a different dimension and know when to push him harder to succeed at something. We have a great partnership with them.”

– Sherri, Nathan’s Mom

Today, as a result of people like you who have generously supported us in the past, Meeting Street is able to offer Nathan, Maya and 3,000 other children from birth to 21 years of age an inclusive environment where they can learn, play, work together and gain confidence and independence.

We ask that you continue to support our remarkable children by giving a gift today. With your help, children with challenges will be able to reap the benefits of Meeting Street’s specialized programs and services – enabling each one of them to reach their full potential. Moreover, your gift will ensure that more children in our community can benefit from our extraordinary resources and flourish in the warm and caring environment that is Meeting Street.

On behalf of all of our children and their families, we thank you for making a donation to Meeting Street.

Sincerely,



John M. Kelly
President

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