

Andrea's Story ~

My name is Andrea and I have a four year old son Sam who attends our local school's special education preschool program. I am a single parent whose job requires me to be at work before Sam goes to school. Luckily, Sam has been going to a family day care home about two blocks from our home. Just as school was ending in June, I started to hear rumors that our town was going to stop providing transportation for children in day care homes. I was told that he would have to be transported to and from my home. I was lost and did not know where to go for answers. One of my relatives told me about Family Continuity and the services they offered. She said that although the person she knew had lots of experience in special education laws, her office was located about sixty miles away.

I contacted the Lowell Wraparound Director and explained my dilemma. In this economy, I could not take the chance of losing my job, but I also could not allow my four year old to stay home alone waiting for his transportation to school in the morning. The director asked me to send her Sam's education plan and any other documentation I had so that she could review his records. A few days later, she contacted me asking if we could possibly meet to discuss the situation. The only day we could do it was on a Saturday, but that wasn't a problem for her.

After reviewing Sam's records, the Wraparound Director asked if I was happy with the educational plan. Since I was really not as familiar with my rights, as most families aren't, I did not realize that I could ask for more services for my son even though I had already signed his plan for the upcoming year. It was at this point that I realized I had more rights as a parent than I thought I did.

We wrote a letter explaining why his transportation was essential and that in actuality, it would not cost the town any additional funding to pick Sam up two blocks away. I made several calls to the various school department programs. They all went unanswered until I got direction on how to advocate for Sam. Once we wrote the letter, including copies to several people, I got an immediate phone call returned.

To make a long story short, Sam began school in September with transportation to and from his day care program. My son is also receiving double the services he would have gotten had I not gotten the help from Family Continuity. Although I may never need to talk to her again, she gave me her telephone number and told me to just give her a call if I have any questions.

If you want to find out more about Family Continuity's Wraparound programs, or any of its services, please visit us on our web site at www.familycontinuity.org, or call our toll-free number at 1-866-219-3320.