

## Alison Eckas story

Written by her dyslexic mom

Kindergarten went great it was all social and games she was ready for that, she passed with flying colors.

In the first grade her life changed. When the first grade came I could see something happening to my bright eyed little girl. Her spirit dimed and her eyes stopped shining. I went to her teacher and told them I have dyslexia, I think she might have it also. The reply was, "We have training on this and we would know if she had it." Her kindergarten teacher and her first grade teacher turned her in to the speech department because they couldn't understand her words. The speech lady wouldn't accept her she was ready to retire and didn't want to take on extra work is my thinking on it. Then Alison started wetting her pants, we had her checked by the doctor nothing was wrong but still she kept wetting her pants. I went to the school therapist Tony Apple she listened and started checking things out. I tried to get her class room teacher changed but the principal would not listen and did not care even though Tony recommended it. Her teacher was going through a divorce and was in a lot of stress this mixed with Alison trying to get out her thoughts and do school work pushed her over the edge she then started pooping her pants. This school year was a living disaster as time went on Alison shut down and would want to disappear and want no human contact; her frustration was so extreme I couldn't get her to want to go to school. Some days she would fight me so hard that she went to school in her pj. There was a time when I would push her out of the car lock the door and throw her shoes out the window. The school wouldn't help; the special committee met and found nothing wrong with her. So we went on building up a wall so thick and deep. My beautiful girl was coarse and ridged now.

Second Grade was better her teacher was soft, kind and understanding she worked with us, she applied for speech and was turned down again. In the third grad she was getting more d's and f's, her third grade teacher was trying to get her in speech, the speech teacher retired that year, and guess what, Alison qualified? The school was tired of us by now, they stopped listening to us. Her teacher didn't bother to let us know she was not turning in her school work till it was late in the year. She sent a note home that Alison has some one read to her that said. "I give up on her, she is not willing to work in class and turn in her work." I was so angry, why did the teacher not let us know? Why did the teacher give her a note she could find out what was written on it? How could a teacher give up? So many questions, **NO ANSWERS**. Alison was slipping away from us we saw no positive change in her sad with drawn little body. We kept asking, telling, begging, and pleading to have her check to see what was wrong, meeting after meeting we went to, no help no encouragement, no hope. At one of the meeting she was present at, the leader of the committee told us she was stubborn, defiant, and lazy, I had enough I stood up to defend my Childs world, I felt a hand pull me back in my chair, my husband (that is the calmest man on this earth) with a red and angry face said "this meeting is over no one will listen to us."

We got her tested with a specialist for \$1,000 he found she was **Dyslexic**, and had **Dysgraphia**. Feeling empowered we went back to the school to let them know what was going to happen they just didn't care they said it was a medical condition and there was nothing they were going to do about it, they had no funding if we wanted help go to Wichita. Yea my mouth fell open also. The therapist told us this would probably happen. The school did not tell us about the 504 plan but they did tell us we didn't qualify for an IEP. The superintendent had a child that was dyslexic; that had graduated a few years before from Augusta was stone like, even with our pleas to him we got nothing, no help.

Now fourth grade, her grades magically went to A's and B's all is good, life is going to be ok, her teacher seemed to understand. She was still in speech. This year was not perfect but was a bearable year. Her teacher was a saint.

In the middle of the year I started watching the fifth grade teacher's, my oldest child was in the fifth grade at this time. One was strict, fair and calm and the other one was a great teacher but she was loud and yelled a lot. I went to the principal to ask for the calm teacher. He was, well I better not say what I thought of him I'm trying not to cuss. He told me, "We try to reflect real life and we can't choose who we are around." I told him, "In real life we do get to choose who we are around after we're not in school, we can choose a job, a boss and to change if we need to." He wouldn't listen, he didn't care.

Fifth grade I pulled her out of public school in fear of the ineffable, I couldn't have her slip any further away. We bought the Abeka home school learning for the fifth grade. We spent a lot on it, it was over \$600.00. We sat down to do our first assignment in reading and she couldn't read. Then we went to math she could add 2+2 on her hands and was not for sure if it was done correctly. YAAAAAAAAA what do we do now?

**We found ourselves in a world screaming, jumping up and down for help as loud as we could. No one came; no one listened, no matter where we went or who we ask. Like a slow motion nightmare, but in this version we were forced by the system to be in a loop and we could not wake up.**

Well we did the best we could do... We ended up skipping a year cuddling, bonding, loving, and trying to get our child back from the dark hole she was consumed by. We found out about the Fundamental Learning Center from our neighbor the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher (not the one we had), she told us about a lady named Stephanie H she was the stricter recess teacher. We were at the point of no trust. We met her with an attitude of caution. The first thing she said was, "Can I hug your child?" That was so odd, so beautiful, that someone cared. Then we began the healing. In the fifth grade Alison was a first grade reader, her math skills were that low as well but with love, teaching, and patience we made it. **BUT AT WHAT COST?** To pay for the classes put a strain on our finances. But it was worth the \$15,000 and four years it took to relearn everything from scratch.

We moved to Wichita and did get a 504 plan and they did help but we had to keep on them the whole time. Then when she got better they wanted to take her off the 504 plan. She

didn't stop having dyslexia or dysgraphia. It will always be with her she just found the tools to help her get the job done.

The cost, Alison lost her childhood to heartbreak and pain, harsh and not understanding teacher's principals with no concern for children, a superintendent that got his children taken care of and left others behind, and a School system that failed. Most kids aren't so lucky they don't have the money for the re-schooling and they just get left behind. Alison has trust issues, doesn't want to be around people. She is socially awkward and shuts down at the first sign of stress and has mood swings. She is in collage because of Stephanie H patients, love and the hard work that it took from both teacher and child. Alison made the climb out of hell and in to the world. She will make it. What about the rest of the children? How many will we lose?

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