

Kids can't wait (and neither can their parents) for treatment at Five Counties Children's Centre

Eileen Kimmett remembers well her journey from blame to shock then relief as her first-born child was diagnosed then treated at Five Counties Children's Centre.

She felt how other mothers looked at her due to the behaviour of her son Quinn, knowing they questioned her parenting. She started to blame herself, until his senior kindergarten teacher pointed her towards help.

After a six-month wait to get into Five Counties Children's Centre, she and her husband Joel found out Quinn has Asperger Spectrum Disorder, a subtype of autism exhibited by repetitive behaviours and difficulty with social interactions. The date sticks in her mind – Sept. 10, 2010.

"What I remember most was the support and kindness of the staff there," Kimmett says.

After the shock of the diagnosis, she was reassured the family was not alone. Kimmett says she grieved for a time then focused on relationship-development intervention program to treat Quinn's symptoms.

Meanwhile, Five Counties' staff came to meetings at Quinn's school to help develop his Independent Education Plan so he received support all around him.

"They really know how to talk to you," Kimmett says. "There's no stigma when you go in there. There are so many incredible kids out there. I cannot imagine them going without Five Counties."

Quinn, now 14, spent his summer volunteering at Kawartha Food Share, learning skills for future employment. Two of his younger siblings – Riker, now 12, and Kedron, 10 – also have had treatments for their attention-deficit disorders and for Kendron's lisp.

"Kids are so happy to go into the waiting area. They are not judged," their mother says. "Our kids have come so far."

The entire Kimmett family is active in the community, participating in events and cheering on others who face challenges in life. They remember well one of the agencies that helped them get answers for their children.

"We didn't go to Five Counties for long, but you just don't forget," Kimmett says.

