

Born prematurely, this Five Counties' client still works on balance at home and school

Baby Jonathan arrived six weeks early and has been working with Five Counties Children's Centre staff ever since to get his muscles to do what he wants.

Now seven, Jonathan had problems swallowing, especially solid food, as an infant. He crawled and walked late, his mother Julia says, and continues to work on his balance and skills, such as jumping. Five Counties' therapists have provided items to help him use utensils and hold a pencil when his hands won't co-operate.

"We started at Five Counties a month after Jonathan was released from the hospital," Julia recalls. "He had a flat spot on the right side of his head and we started seeing physiotherapist to fix the problem."

Over the years, the Peterborough boy spent time with a speech pathologist and an occupational therapist to learn to eat, speak and develop fine and gross motor skills. Staff also made sure he



continues to get therapies at school so he can do his best there.

Medical Director Shelina Manji also confirmed a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

"Dr. Manji prescribed medication which has helped with his focus so that he is able to do all the therapies," Julie adds.

"Five Counties has helped us so much with school, from making sure that Jonathan has an Individualized Education Plan and a full-time

education assistant. It has also helped him believe that as long as you keep trying you will succeed at your goal."

His parents are grateful for the support they have received as they learn alongside their son.

"It has not only assisted Jonathan but assisted us as parents, both in sending home tips and exercises that we can do at home to assess him, but also encouraging us when things have been difficult," his mother says.

While Jonathan still visits Five Counties to do therapeutic jumping games in its hallways, hundreds of children are waiting for services to help them be more active or develop their skills at school. Donations help to keep more than 500 of the 4,000 children who come to Five Counties each year in treatment.

While each child has his or her own journey, Jonathan's parents echo words shared by other Five Counties' families before them.

"They are amazing. They make sure the whole family is taken care of," Julia says.

