

Through Kady's Eyes

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It has been a true blessing in my life having the opportunity to work with EagleEyes. Over the past year and a half, I have introduced EagleEyes into the lives of numerous children from the ages of five to fifteen. My experiences with these children have forever filled my heart and mind with very special memories.

The first time I experienced the power of EagleEyes was with a twelve year old girl, named Kady. She has no control over her body, except for small movements in her left hand and arm, and her eyes. She has a hearing loss and has Cortical Visual Impairment, (CVI). She is often only comfortable lying on her back with her head turned to the right side.

Kady's family and I had been anticipating the opportunity to test her with EagleEyes. I practiced using the system countless times on my own children so Kady's first experience might be as smooth and positive as possible. I put the EagleEyes electrodes on her face, and downloaded the Aliens Game she would play on my lap top. I held the computer on its side near her face. Within minutes, she was shooting down aliens by exploding them on visual contact, engaging in a computer game for the first time. Normally, on a good day Kady maintained her visual tracking for only several minutes at a time. But, this time, right away her eyes opened widely and she was looking at the aliens. Her tracking was phenomenal! She played without tiring for about 20 minutes. She took a short break and played for 15 minutes more!

What made this experience most special for me wasn't that she was tracking so long or even that she was enjoying it, which certainly was a major event. The part that made it emotionally unforgettable was that Kady's dad joined in, and he began controlling the vertical movement of the cursor while she controlled the horizontal. After a short time passed, dad suddenly became aware that he was playing a video game with his daughter, and the atmosphere in the room transformed into a blessed moment that will forever be frozen in time. He played a game with his daughter for the first time in their lives.

It doesn't end there: Kady's mother, brother and sister are now able to play the game with her and EagleEyes has changed the dynamics of the family forever. Having something they can all do together as a family has been a wonderful and enlightening experience for them.

I have seen first-hand how much Kady's family loves her and how much fun it has been for them to see her experience some joy in an activity that she can control herself. Recently, I watched her play a game of soccer on the computer thanks to EagleEyes, by choosing which ball to kick to make a goal. With her dad's face close to hers, he coaxes her to go for a particular ball. When she chooses the one he wants, he cheers. When she chooses a different one, he teases her.

I am truly honored to watch children like Kady smile, and watch their families share cherished moments and experiences with their children.

EagleEyes is a technology that can give someone control who has very little control over anything at all in their life. It can inspire grins, giggles, and laughter. It can bring a family together for an activity. It can unlock the ability to make choices and be a tremendous augmentative device providing an accommodation for educational programs in school and at home.

I said in the beginning, I am the blessed and lucky one. It is a selfish sort of luck I suppose, because joy fills my soul and I am a spectator during these experiences. I have the opportunity to observe the love that parents have for their very special children, and the opportunity to watch children seize the moment and put their whole hearts into something new and previously inaccessible. I thank these families for sharing their children with me and allowing me to participate in such touching moments.

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Kady