

Summary of Changes reported by parents:

- This is a tough one - we have seen hundreds in Steve's body - lists that go for days
- The number one change is the shift in Steve's body - it is CALM in sync
- The number one change that has happened to our family is we are in sync we are a family who found some answers to our heartfelt worries and concerns for our son. We not only found answers, we also found help
- We have watch Steve gain so much in the last year and a half, that our hearts sing in joy.
- It is like we have been battling this big bad Autism Dragon for years and now we get to put down our shields and swords.

Changes reported by parents through email correspondence:

- Nov 24
 - I would like to send some general observations we have noticed happening with Steve. They are listed in random order:
 - sleeping on his back
 - asking for a hair-cut as he thinks his hair is too long
 - flossing his teeth (with Dad's help at bed time only)
 - appears much calmer
 - body seems relaxed
 - stretches out with arms crossed behind his head
 - very aware of events - remembering and connecting ideas' to previous experiences (Halloween - and the upcoming Christmas season)
 - telling us that he does not want to wear an undershirt under his shirts
 - no problem with different types of socks
 - going skating with his Dad - using a hockey stick - and shooting a puck
 - not one glimmer of problem with the transition to winter gear - I am still in shock
 - using non-verbal gesture communication (like come here - or using his fingers to point to things - and he even shrugged his shoulders when his sister asked him a question..... It was a perfect response to the given situation as he didn't want to reveal who ate the last cookie)
- Dec 1
 - "Steve is fantastic right now – WOW you should see him shovel the snow – watching him through the warmth of our home – not sure what feels better – seeing his body move in-sync or the smile on his face!!!!"
- Dec 19
 - "Steve is one Christmas elf - like we have never seen him before. We are more than thrilled this year to see the magic of Christmas unfold in our son's life".
- Feb 4
 - "I thought you would like to know that the amazing Steve is now requesting and using a fork. This break through is one for the books"

- April 22
 - "Lots of dilated pupils this week with the rainy/cloudy weather. Last week during Steve's trip to the library - they brought home books on Cardinals and guess who saw one yesterday and came running in the house to gather Dad and Sister to see."

- June 15
 - Lots of great news to share with you ~ we have watched Steve's growth this past 6 weeks and we are happy to report a few success stories.
 - It seems as though Steve has overcome some "fears" - for example. During the show American Idol - he didn't want to join the family watching the program BUT in the morning he always asked who was voted out.
 - didn't want to go to Wonderland - but wanted to hear all about the rides
 - I guess you might say that he is further processing the possibilities - like he needs to hear about them first - process and then experience them.
 - We had a pretty cool experience planting our herb garden. He is even smelling the herbs and helps cut them for recipes - we are also observing other peoples herbs that they grow in their garden.
 - Switched to a new bike helmet with pride and a smirk - like look at me in my super cool new bike helmet. Steve rides in tandem on the back of dad's bike. (dad too is the proud new owner of a super cool new bike helmet too!)
 - Really expressing his needs and desires. "Mom the noise of the machine is too much for me and I can't take it any more". At School he has told his EA upon arrival at the library "thanks for the peace and quiet" - We are very proud that Steve can articulate the needs he is feeling - makes things do I dare say easier for us to help guide him through situations.
 - Steve has been crossing his fingers together. I nearly fell over when I saw him do it - then one day I watched him cross and uncross them and stare at his hands - like "holy cow am I a magician?!" Equally he often sits now cross legged or in the car he crosses one leg over the other. Pretty cool!!
 - Yesterday in the car he was chewing a piece of gum and he was just chomping on it to beat the band (dad and I both were actually delighted to hear the sound of Steve's extra loud chomp!!) He made some lemonade and was testing the flavour of it and he was actually smacking his mouth together making sound effects - I may need to show you in person what he was doing. Once again I was blown away at his body!!!

 - He hurt himself and was actually saying mom quick it hurts - it hurts! (He felt pain!!) Not that I am happy he was hurt, but this is huge!
 - He is helping plan our vacation plans - he has hopes of going to the ROM, Science Centre, the Zoo and a Bugatorium. Oh we had a trip to the ROM - just Steve and I! I may need to tell you all about the experience - one for the memory album!!
 - One day when we were watching his sister's swimming lessons - I asked him if he would like to take swimming lessons too. His response was "Mom how about I take flying lesson's or sailing lesson's okay?!"

- Oh - something else which we are thrilled about is Steve's desire to listen to stories about the things that we have done - or childhood stories or what dad saw at work -etc. This is really, really neat -
 - I am sure that I have forgotten a bunch more Valerie - BUT I think that you will get the general theme to Steve's success. I try to keep my emotions in check Valerie. BUT let me tell you I have tears of joy - I have tears of possibility and tears of hope like I have never had before!!
- June 30
 - Oh - did we tell you that Steve is now jumping of the diving board and swimming to the ladder of our friends' pool!!!
- July 13
 - Oh - an update about Steve's program - all new activities are implemented and I am just fascinated how Steve's body is now able to handle (no pun intended) a face tap. One year ago - you couldn't even entertain the thought - and in the fall we couldn't even model on our face - without Steve experiencing a state change. Amazing!!!
- Aug 7
 - Our Handle program is currently consisting of our more calming activities (like a gentle enhancement program). Traveling and inconstant locations is a bit of a challenge not only for Steve but dad and I as well. The weather has thrown some curves at us as well - lots of dilated pupils and red ears. Steve has also just experience another bowel episode as well - Makes me wish that Dr. Edwards didn't have a year long wait list!! I have been in touch with our Naturopath and we are changing Steve dose of his current remedy as well.
 - We have introduced Stern math - very slowly and Steve is quite the eager little student - we are hearing works like "that is one more - and ten is bigger than nine.
 - Steve and I are playing -"A Pocket Full of Coins" and I dare say the little guy is rich with all his coins. Yesterday we made it through level 2!!!
- Sept 25
 - Steve has not been himself lately - night waking and body out of sync (I definitely think it is school related). He has had a full body Bowen treatment with our Naturopath BUT I think that Steve needs to be in your hands and HANDLE eyes. As do we!!!! We had one of the best summers ever - dad off for 4 weeks a daughter without illness and Steve with a body that is regulated and do I dare say integrated!!!! We hate watching Steve go through this
- Oct 6
 - I wanted to send you some of the things that we have observed with Steve over the summer and into the fall.
 - Our HANDLE Program has been a hit and miss since school started We hang onto the calming activities for Steve
 - He is at school until 11:25 each day and then hangs out with me or dad.

- Anyway the following is a list of things that we have observed and or experienced with Steve:
 - hold phone in one hand - push # with the other hand and then has a back and forth conversation with Grandparents.
 - hold fishing pole in one hand and reel with the other
 - actually "fished" on our holiday
 - swimming in lake!!!!
 - kayaking - paddle boating and took a sailing lesson (through a program called "Able Sail")
 - asked to take archery lesson's
 - could slap mosquito's - told me that if he put spit on the bite it took the itch away
 - able to articulate where he was itching and asked me to scratch
 - went on a floatation device and asked Grandma to pull him around
 - built campfires - search for wood, crumple paper, set up the firewood
 - roasted marshmallow's (actually held the stick - put on the marshmallow and roasted in fire - turning the stick)
 - totally independent getting dressed - even asks for privacy!!
 - standing up to go pee (seriously!!)
 - able to articulate what type of socks he would like to wear - able to say that the sock is a problem and he would like the ones with the green stripe on them
 - slept with a fan on (asked for a fan in his room)
 - told me that at night he likes the windows closed because he doesn't like the night time noises (and here I thought he was autistic and had ritualistic behaviors)
 - SERIOUSLY -
 - while we traveled he would look out the car window (turn his body and head to see things)
 - crosses his legs while in a car
 - follows his maps and asks which direction we are heading
 - played baseball with a t-ball stand - could totally hit the ball and then run the bases
 - held conversations with people
 - Really cool tactic that Steve has is he opens a conversation with "mom what do you know about how cartoons are made?" waits for my answer and then proceeds to tell me what he knows. OR he asks someone what their favorite cartoon is then will reply my favorite is
 - asked for a new winter coat
 - previewed on line what coats where available at what stores
 - went shopping and couldn't find the red puffy coat (then I tracked the red coat down and Steve tried it on when I brought it home) told me he needed a new hat and new mittens
 - went shopping for new hat and mitts and now he tries them on to show people (like my parents and brother when the popped in throughout the weekend)

- Is telling us that he will need the winter clothes for sledding and skiing and building snowmen etc
 - recalls past events - like we went to the apple orchard last year with Dad
 - that is the restaurant we use to go to for Breakfast (like 2 years ago)
 - we have a painting in our house from that my parents gave to us last year for Christmas - when we drove past the place where the scene is from Steve shouted "Hey that is the view from our painting at home"
 - Horse back riding is going fabulous - Steve is very enthusiastic about Horse Back Riding - he is learning to trot, using the reigns, holding onto a sword and getting the rings off the posts and then dropping the rings he collects into the net, he even did "around the world" the other day (I am learning all the horse lingo I can)
 - has been out skating with dad - able to bend knees and do sculling - still shuffles along other wise BUT much more relaxed on the ice
 - Went to shinny hockey today with a group of home school kids - Steve told me that he is no good because his balance is off and he can't skate fast!
 - I told him that Valerie could help him!! So lets see if he asks you about it during our visit
 - His eyes are now crossing to look upwards (like into the top of his ball cap) or behind him while he is lying on his back!!!! Very cool!!!!
 - asking for garlic bread a lot lately.
- Okay - I know that there is more BUT I think that you can start to understand our excitement around our household!
- Jan 6
 - "We have just celebrated one of the Best Christmas's EVER! It was like our son opened the "Christmas File Folder" in his mind and he remembered every single thing from years past and sought out people to experience them with this season. It was one of the greatest gifts our family has ever received and in all honesty I am still overflowing with emotions that I can't even form words to express how I am feeling kinda like I am "Havin a Moment""
- Jan 20
 - "So Steve went to our local dentist the other day he opened his mouth and had them pick off the tartar We have the dentist horror story in our book we haven't taken Steve to a dentist in years and put a lot of faith in our non - toxic brand of kids tooth paste. Our local dentist knows us and understands Steve's need to see how things work. We have been in for a few pre-visits of only sitting in the chair checking out how things work what the instruments are called etc etc. THEN I found my inner strength and actually booked an official appointment!!! We didn't tell Steve about the appointment until the hour before it was booked - lessen any anxiety for him. So on this day we celebrate Steve opening his mouth for a dentist and we celebrate the day!"

- Feb 11
 - Have I told you that our dear Steve man is now down hill skiing, even going up on a chair lift!!!!!!!!!!!! How do you spell Vestibular?
 - Also - our son now makes comments like "this is okay mom **"I can Handle this"!!!!**
 - He also "hopes" like "I hope I have a fun ski lesson today " or "I hope my Doris reads from our chapter book today" BEYOND the moon eh?