

"Repetition Awakens the SPARK": Riley's Story



Riley, 4 years old

When Riley first joined our SPARK program at our newest replication site; Springfield, she faced several challenges. She struggled to hold a marker, couldn't identify letters, and was unable to write her name. Riley also showed signs of echolalia—repeating back exactly what was said to her, rather than initiating her own responses.

But from the very beginning, Riley's Parent Partner saw her potential. Each visit followed a consistent routine, which Riley quickly grew to love. They would begin with the skills checklist in her journal—Riley's favorite part—before diving into a storybook and then hands-on activities. This structure gave Riley a sense of comfort and confidence.

One of Riley's biggest motivators? Stickers! Her face would light up every time she earned one for her learning wheel, proudly marking each new skill she mastered. Her excitement was contagious, and her eagerness to learn grew with every visit. In fact, she began waiting by the window, watching for her Parent Partner to arrive.

Over the months, Riley's progress has been nothing short of inspiring. She can now:

- Count confidently to 20
- Name all her colors
- Hold a writing utensil and trace her name
- Say the letters in her name
- Identify all the shapes on her skills checklist

Even more remarkable is her growth in communication. Riley now participates actively in lessons, with far less repetition and more back-and-forth conversation. Her voice, once an echo, has become a vibrant part of every interaction.

Her parents have been deeply involved throughout the journey and are incredibly grateful for the SPARK program. They’ve witnessed firsthand the transformation in Riley—her confidence, her skills, and her joy in learning.

Riley’s story is a beautiful reminder of what consistent support, loving guidance, and a little sparkle of motivation can do.