

# fAMILY

## MEET KELLY DAVIES

Parent Advocate of the Month

April 2025

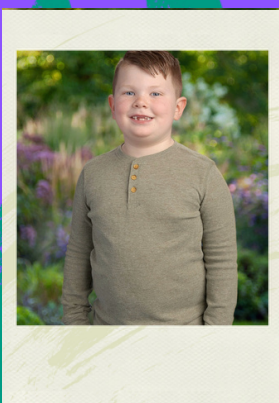


### WHAT MADE YOU ADVOCATE FOR YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION?

My son, Gannon, is epileptic and at the time he was suffering from 20+ seizures a day, he required hugs to make him feel safe after an episode and was refused by the teacher. I went as far to get a letter from CHOP instructing his teacher to give him hugs - this still did not work. Gannon had behavioral issues reported every day, although the BCBA said that every time he was called the issues were just an emotional response stemming from the behavior of others. Gannon was terrified of school, would come home hysterical and broken out in hives, and although he had been fully potty trained for 2 years, reverted to wetting himself daily.

### WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO EDUCATE YOURSELF ABOUT SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES?

To me, being my child's best advocate means I'm his voice when he doesn't have one. I'm protecting him even when I'm not there and that I'm properly setting him up for a successful future starting with a fair and safe learning environment.



### WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE OTHER FAMILIES ADVOCATING FOR THEIR CHILD'S RIGHTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION?

My biggest piece of advice for other families is to follow your gut. As a parent, if something feels wrong, it probably is. Do not back down, no one knows your child the way that you do. Regardless of the school's influence, at the end of the day, YOU are your child's voice and best person to help with their success.

### WHAT DOES BEING YOUR CHILD'S BEST ADVOCATE MEAN TO YOU?

I've found the best way to learn more about special education and related services is through speaking with others who either work in the field or who have gone through similar situations. In this age of social media, it's easy with Facebook groups to connect with others who are much more experienced. That's how I found out about advocacy to begin with, and I'll never stop being grateful for that tip!

