

# Know Me

NAME **Jordan**

PASSION **Singing  
& Dancing**

## My Story

Meet 11-year-old Jordan Hutchison, daughter of Dina and Zackary. She has been a part of Stark DD programs since she was in preschool at Eastgate Early Childhood and Family Center. She is currently a student at Stark DD's Rebecca Stallman Southgate School.

A resident of Minerva, Jordan loves her family that includes her parents, older sisters Peyton and Kiki, and younger sister Kiera. Jordan loves animals, especially the two family cats, Thunder and Harley, and their Saint Bernard, Cooper.

Jordan was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Pica disorder. "She has made great progress. When she was a student at Eastgate preschool, Jordan didn't talk much," said Dina, Jordan's mom. "When she did talk, it was gibberish, nothing you could understand. And then Jordan discovered singing."

According to Dina, Jordan started singing Disney songs she heard. "She would sing Little Mermaid, and not realize she was talking," said Dina. "In the last three years she has flourished."

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YouTube

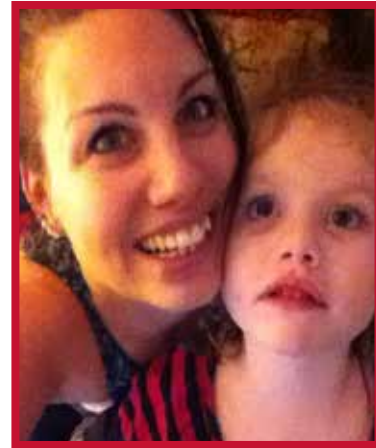
Jordan's RS Southgate School teacher, Rebecca Shade, also recognizes all that Jordan has accomplished.

"Jordan is a funny, smart, confident, strong-willed preteen. She loves to laugh, sing, dance and make others happy. She is a social butterfly who will say "hi" to anyone she may encounter and will continue to say "hi" until they say it back to her. Jordan has turned into an independent, hard-working young lady who enjoys school and has established her own routine while there," said Mrs. Shade. Jordan's speech has improved immensely over the last few years and now she uses her words to ask others questions, make funny statements, express her needs/wants and sing all the lyrics to her favorite songs. (While using her shiny, pink microphone of course!) Jordan has worked so hard on how she handles her emotions and building relationships with others. With peers who are younger and smaller, Jordan enjoys going over and bending down to be at their level so she can smile and say "hi" to them."

"Jordan enjoys listening to GoNoodle, Kidz Bop Kids and pretty much any music we listen to in our classroom. Even when a song is over, you most likely will hear her singing or humming a song to herself as she works on her own," said Mrs. Shade. "She does a great job using our classroom computer independently. She likes to play different educational games or just listening to stories/articles read out loud to her. She also really likes swinging on swings outside and being pushed across the gym on a scooter board or riding a bike during recess."

"As her teacher, I am so proud of all that she has accomplished in my time knowing her. Jordan is able to follow directions and do tasks like folding the classroom laundry, cleaning up after herself after eating, shredding our recyclables and assisting staff with whatever they may ask her to do. Jordan enjoys using her communication device to discover new words, communicate words that she may have a difficult time articulating to others and now she uses it to spell words out loud! While her peers use icons primarily to complete academic assignments, Jordan is working on writing her responses and name. Jordan's lovable personality and the desire to do "thumbs up" work makes time spent with Jordan not only rewarding, but also so enjoyable!"

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In addition to the educational support from Stark DD School Programs, the family has utilized Stark DD Family Support Service funds (FSS) for both Jordan and sister Kiera, also diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

“The family received FSS funds for both of their girls and have used the money to purchase a fence from Southway Fence Company. It has made a big difference and provides a sense of safety when the girls are outside,” said Rebekah Matheny, Stark DD Service and Support Administrator. “Additionally, we used county board funds to pay for some respite over the summer last year. This was helpful as both girls had been home because of COVID, so the respite helped the family manage.”

In addition to singing, music and school, Jordan enjoys being outside and playing sports, especially swimming.

“For the first time this summer she is signed up for a swim team in Salem for kids with autism,” said Dina. “We found out about it through her specialist at Akron Children’s Hospital. They will even do swim competitions. We are so excited.”



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