

HELP FOR GOOD

Declan



**Stark County
Board of
Developmental
Disabilities**



Declan

Declan Majors, 1 1/2 years old, is the son of Ryan and Courtney Majors. He is a happy boy who loves music and laughing at different sounds. He brings joy and laughter to the whole family.

Declan is diagnosed with [congenital cytomegalovirus](#) (CMV) which caused his cerebral palsy.

“Congenital CMV can also affect his hearing and vision, but so far those two things seem minimally affected,” said mom, Courtney. CMV is a virus that causes symptoms like a common cold, and is extremely prevalent in the general population. It rarely causes severe problems for a fetus, but in Declan’s case it altered the way his brain grew.

Declan loves to sit and stand while assisted so he can look at and explore new areas. His glasses help him when he is being read some of his favorite books like *Grumpy Monkey* and *Never Touch a Shark*. Declan also loves swinging outside and going for walks with mom and dad.

He has overcome a lot in a short time, from strengthening his body, to finding medications that help with his tight muscles.

“[Stark County Early Intervention](#) has been a wonderful resource for him,” said Courtney. “They have guided him in what positions can help build muscle strength, and have been hands on with him enough to suggest different questions to ask his physicians regarding his treatments.”

For example, Jen Masser, his Stark DD Physical Therapist, noticed his legs crossing a lot and made the suggestion we check and see if he needed an x-ray of his hips. With that x-ray his physiatrist was able to see he was still too tight and needed to increase his medications. He is even able



to borrow a stander from Stark DD Early Intervention, which is especially helpful since he is so small but is growing fast. "Finding an affordable one that would grow with him would have been difficult," said Courtney.

Stark DD Early Intervention Developmental Specialist Amanda Haga has teamed up with Jen Masser, Stark DD PT, to work with Declan and his family. "When it comes to the family, we have given suggestions and they have implemented them. They make our job easy," said Amanda.

"Amanda and Jen offer suggestions when it comes to his feeding. Using the jiggle as a vibrating spoon helped him find the sensory input appealing and even made him more interested in foods and textures," said Courtney.

"Being a first time parent is tough, but being a first time parent trying to navigate the care for a special needs child can be especially difficult. It is nice to have people there to answer questions and make suggestions who are highly trained in that area," said Courtney.

Declan continues to work on his goals, which include being mobile in some way, and showing his appreciation for all his favorite songs. He gets stronger and more curious every day and it is an absolute joy to watch him grow.

Amanda and Jen both agree that Declan is a joy to work with and he is overcoming so much with minor modifications and adaptations. "Courtney is great about reaching out and asking her help when she needs it and is wonderful about observing what Declan needs and advocating for him," said Amanda.

