

HELP FOR GOOD

Carter



Stark County
Board of
Developmental
Disabilities



Carter

Meet three-year-old Carter Wofford, son of Darnella Jenkins.

"I became part of the Early Intervention program at a very difficult time in me and Carter's life. Carter's journey started during a stressful time -- the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to personal stress. Despite being full term he had to spend 2 days in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) for breathing support," said Darnella.

Darnella realized he wasn't quite acting like other kids and wasn't meeting his developmental milestones. She shared her concerns with Carter's pediatrician, who then made the referral to Stark County Early Intervention. After an assessment, Carter started receiving [Early Intervention](#) (EI) services shortly after his first birthday.

With the help of his EI team, specialist helped Darnella work on Carter's mobility, eating, behavior, communication and play. He learned to walk using a gait trainer and parallel bars loaned by Stark DD and was able to borrow a rocking horse and trampoline to help figure out his sensory needs.

Mom was able to purchase seating and toys to help with Carter's development using [Family Support Services](#) funds. Early Intervention was also able to help get Carter an adaptive stroller though his insurance because he was too tall for a standard stroller and going out was a struggle.

Jennifer Massar, Stark County Early Intervention Physical Therapist, was able to support Darnella through multiple life



altering diagnoses including: cerebral palsy, a genetic anomaly, and ultimately autism spectrum disorder level 3. “Early intervention helped mom understand that Carter is developing at his own pace and that supporting him where he is will get him there faster than following our own expectations,” Massar said.

Carter is a very loving and happy boy. He is now able to walk and is starting to play with toys. He is bringing more foods to his mouth and has avoided needing a feeding tube. He loves his blanket, Coco Melon, clapping and hearing things crash.

Upon turning three years old, Carter has transitioned out of early intervention, and he is now receiving preschool services through Canton City Schools and will continue his journey with the support of SSA services.

“The EI program has been phenomenal at helping Carter achieve milestones, supportive services, and linking me to community resources as well as a great advocate for Carter needs. I personally thank Stark DD Early Intervention Physical Therapist Jennifer Massar for her compassion, dedication and efficiency in working with Carter. I am grateful for the impact Early Intervention has had on our lives,” said Darnella.

Carter, with mom Darnella, and Jenn Massar, Stark County Early Intervention Physical Therapist (left).



