

BAMBI NEWS

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Mommy Milestones

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A BAMBI mom's story of the struggles and joys of watching her son Killian improve with therapy continues...

As you know, children have to reach certain milestones at different stages along the way and this is how we track their development. Obviously, my son didn't meet certain milestones on time and this is how we discovered he had some developmental delays. However this article isn't about my son and his milestones. Instead, it is about a milestone that I have reached as a parent.

Week 11: Milestones have been met

We are almost at the end of our 12 week ESDM (Early Start Denver Model) Therapy at the Reed Institute. It has been a whirlwind of information and play therapy, that is sometimes hard for me to even remember where we came from and where we are now. In speaking with Killi's doc, I wanted to know what the next phase is in our therapy plan. Since Killi is not speaking yet we are clearly not ready to be finished with therapy and the Reed Institute.

In discussing our next semester with Ali at the Reed Institute, he mentions how we will start bringing Killi in the morning and dropping him off, leaving him at the Institute for the entire morning and increasing his session time by one hour. There will also be some days where I will take him to a playgroup at a Preschool on a soi right by the Institute so he can have interaction with other children his age in a structured setting.

As the doc tells me that I will be dropping him off for the entire morning and leaving him, all I can think is "How is Killi going to be okay without me?". A couple hours a day is okay when he is with the nanny but now, being alone until noon with no nanny or mommy! That means he won't be home until lish... I am a little nervous but again, whatever the doc says I agree to and I



know it will be best for my son. This is all in preparation for Preschool, which we will be signing up for in September.

Although this doesn't seem like a big deal, it is! I was okay leaving my son at Daycare back in the states, when I had to go to work. As dumb as this sounds, I am thinking "I know he isn't like every other kid. I feel as though he needs me more now than ever." What's funny is I am not the helicopter type mom, the one that is always hovering over the kids. I am actually super laid back and let my son explore and if that means he falls and scrapes his knees or breaks one of his toys because he is discovering how gravity works then so be it. It's funny how hypocritical I am as a parent. In one instant I am saying "Go son! Do your thing but be careful!" but in the next second I am paralyzed with fear thinking "I am abandoning him when he doesn't have the tools (speech and social skills) that he needs to be without me at school". I think that if he was on track developmentally like other 2.5 year olds, I wouldn't even think twice about him in a school setting without mom but for some reason this is a little more difficult for me to wrap my head around...

Back to the story, so Ali, Killi's doc says "Don't worry, we will do this next term." – that was on a Friday. I think "OK, cool! I have another month. I am sure I can handle this next month." Monday morning I take Killi to therapy and Ali says "Well, I thought about it this weekend and you can go now. We don't need to wait until next term to do this." "Huh? You want me to leave? Right now?" Ali says "Yea sure! You can go relax at a coffee shop and come back to pick him up at noon." So I try and make an excuse, "Well I didn't bring my computer so I can't go work at a coffee shop...." Ali says "OK, well go home and relax! Killi will be fine!" All I could say was "Oh. Okay..." and I left. Killi didn't even bat an eye at my leaving because he was playing but as I left, I couldn't help but worry a little "Am I doing the right thing? Is he ready for this?" After a BTS ride, I arrive home and Odie is super confused and nervously asks "Where's Killian!?" All I can say to her is "I left him...."

I would say that I did reach and survive the milestone of dropping the kid off at school and instead of crying like a baby, I went home and went to work. Better to work than to think about how we aren't together. After a week of this process of dropping him off at therapy and leaving, I find it is actually liberating! I am now a huge fan and I know that this is wonderful social playtime for my son because he has to be with others instead of clinging to mommy's leg all of the time.

Freedom for mommy. Freedom for Killi.

Next week is our final week of therapy for the term. This is when we will find out Killi's progress on all of his developmental goals the doc set for him and what's next with his therapy. Exciting!

Week 12: Finished for now...

Our twelve weeks of ESDM Therapy has come to a close. It's amazing how far my son has come and how much he has changed in such a short time. This has been a very trying time in our lives as a family and as some of you can relate, having a "special" kid is exhausting and overwhelming. But during those times when you get a big hug or you truly see a difference in your child's development, you seem to forget all of the hard times.

During our last week, before the winter break, we met with our doc to go over Killi's progress with the original objectives and goals he had set for him in the evaluation and also discover what the next step will be. We were so encouraged to hear that Killi has passed every single goal set for him, some faster than others, and all were met by the twelfth week. I just want to share one goal from each category that my son was not doing in September and now as of December, he is accomplishing/performing with no issues whatsoever.

1. Receptive Language: Responds to voice by turning toward the person. Objective: During circle time, Killian will demonstrate awareness of voice by turning his eyes and head to look at the person in three or more opportunities.
2. Expressive Communication: Points or signals proximally to request desired object. Objective: Killian will signal proximally by way of gaze and hand clapping to request a desired object. He will request for help using gestures combined with gaze five or more times per day across two or more people.
3. Gross Motor: Walks around the object on the floor rather than stepping on them. Objective: Killian will show awareness of body



was an unrealistic dream but then again, most dreams are. Our next step, which I mentioned in the previous post, will be to get my son school ready. He will work through another twelve weeks of ESDM Therapy at the Reed Institute. In addition to ESDM, he will be going through speech and language therapy, his "school" time will be extended until noon and when he is finishes "school" for the day he will have lunch, then ride the bus home with the nanny from the Institute (who he adores), where I will be waiting for him with open arms!

“I am hopeful that 2014 will be the year I hear my little boys voice squeak out “I love you mommy!””

in relation to objects by stepping over or walking around objects in 80% of opportunities across at least two environments.

4. Behavior: Tolerates adult proximity and interaction. Objective: Killian will allow or tolerate adult proximity without behavioral problems for 5 minutes in 80% of opportunities.
5. Social Interaction: Responds to greeting by looking, turning, etc.. Objective: Killian will demonstrate awareness of greeting by turning his head and body to look at the adult for 2-3 seconds in 80% of opportunities.
6. Personal Independence: Eats meals and snacks at the table. Objective: Killian will sit at the table through a meal.

We thought after twelve weeks we would be finished ,or at least I was hoping, we would be finished with therapy and my son would be back to "normal". But that didn't happen. It

I give all the glory to God for bringing our family to Bangkok, showing us the problem our son was dealing with, having the strength to admit there is a problem, and the courage to help change the situation. We have been blessed with supportive family, friends, and a top-notch doctor.

Thanks for following our story. I hope for some of you it has given you the strength that you need to get through what you might be going through in your own life or maybe this just helped you to know you aren't alone. We all have our own issues but it's how we choose to live with the situation and work through it that set us apart.

I will continue to blog about Killi's progress and all of the changes I will see in him from home. Please keep us in your prayers! I am hopeful that 2014 will be the year I hear my little boys voice squeak out "I love you mommy!" It's going to be a good year.