

Change Is Possible – Oskar’s Story

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My son Oskar has a rare chromosomal deletion on the fifth chromosome. It means he has severe global developmental delay, seizures, hypotonia, and some autistic features. In layman’s terms, it means that at 6½ years old, he can’t walk or talk yet, and he eats only purees and thickened fluids.

I first came across the Masgutova Method® quite by accident about two years ago. After fighting with insurance for years, I had finally gotten Oskar qualified for speech therapy under ‘oral motor’. (Apparently NOT SPEAKING does not qualify you for speech therapy.) I took him in for an assessment and first appointment at a well-regarded therapy center, and watched as the therapist fed him a Cheeto and stuck a few vibrating brushes in his mouth. I was crestfallen. This was nothing new, nothing we hadn’t already been doing at home and at school for years. I knew this wasn’t going to change things for Oskar. I knew he needed something different.

It just so happened that the same week, the center I took him for occupational therapy was hosting a Mini-Clinic with Dr. Masgutova. They had mentioned that they thought Oskar would benefit from seeing her and so I signed him up. During her Assessment, she told me some exercises she thought would help him, and he had an hour of work from a Core Specialist. I don’t think I understood a lot of what happened, but I did feel like at least it was something different than ‘Cheeto therapy’ and it made sense to me that Oskar needed help that started from the bottom up. He needed those first steps, those primary reflexes he had missed out on somehow.

I signed Oskar up for speech with a therapist there who was using the Masgutova Method®. We went every week and I did the five or so exercises that they told me to do with Oskar.

One of the exercises they had me working on was Hands Supporting. Basically, it’s the reflex to put your hands out and protect your face when you fall over. Oskar didn’t have that one and so when he was sitting he would just tip over. One day, a few months after we started using the method, he started to tip and he put his hands out! “Oh my God!” I thought, “It’s working!”

That summer we signed up for an eight-day conference and we just



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Oskar receiving MNRI® at a Family Conference with Core Specialist Tanya Hallman.



Left, Oskar showing off his Hands Supporting.

Right, Oskar and Mom goofing off.



attended our second conference in Orlando this January.

The changes I have seen in Oskar are so encouraging. I know the Core Specialists he works with could explain them in terms of reflexes but for me, he is just a different kid. He is generally so much more present. He looks at me when I talk to him. He laughs. He sleeps! For years, we both spent hours awake in the middle of the night. Now if he wakes up he can put himself back to sleep. He is working on crawling; his trunk control and head righting are so much better. He can drink from a straw. He uses his hands now, instead of keeping them balled into fists. His vision and hearing are better. No more glasses to keep his eyes from crossing! He is so much stronger and one of the biggest changes for me, is that now I can carry him on my hip, like a typical toddler. He used to throw himself into extension all the time – arch like he was trying to get away. Now he holds on to me. He was getting so big and strong I almost couldn't carry him any more.

While I don't have a 'big bang' story to relate, all these little changes make a huge difference for Oskar and for me. Some of my friends with special needs kids who have been skeptical of trying 'another new thing' have started Masgutova therapy, too, because of the progress they have seen Oskar make.

A little boy we know with CP told his Mom the other day that when he gets "strong like Oskar, he'll be able to dance." I can't believe that Oskar has gotten to a point where his strength is inspirational for other kids. I can't tell you how far he's come.

I feel like I spent so many years and so much money taking him to therapists who didn't know what to do, who had never "seen a kid like him." The biggest gift the Masgutova Method® has given me is the feeling of hope, of being with therapists who have seen miracles, and seen kids like Oskar and know that change is possible and, if we work hard enough, inevitable.



Oskar with Mom and sister Maddie.



Oskar, you are a real Winner! With all your strength for changes and growth, you can do a lot to move further! We wish you good health and success in your future! Thank you, Blake for all your care for Oskar and trust in us as specialists! – The MNRI® Specialists.