

“Upledger CranioSacral Therapy gave my child recovery from an autism spectrum diagnosis”



EMILY FRANCIS,
LMT

That sounds really bold... but it's true. My child was diagnosed with mild/moderate autism spectrum disorder at age 3. We did the diet, we were already in speech therapy twice a week and then we enrolled in an intensive ABA therapy school providing four hours a day of 1:1 therapy. This program allowed no time off; not spring break, holiday break or a summer break. Upon receiving the diagnosis, we saw every specialist in town; neurologist, genetic pediatrician, developmental pediatrician, child psychologist, the county school system, a nutritionist, eye doctors, stool sample testing along with blood, urine and saliva. You name it and we did it. With the therapy, ABA school and diet in place at the first six month re-evaluation since the initial testing and diagnosis, we saw only a three month developmental increase. That means that she was developing at a rate of exactly half of a neurotypical child.

The following six months there was only one thing we added to her schedule. Everything else remained the same (therapies, ABA and diet). That addition was Upledger CranioSacral Therapy. I had traveled to south Florida to interview John Matthew for my book *The Body Heals Itself: How Deeper Awareness of Your Muscles and Their Emotional Connection can Help You Heal*. I wanted to talk about fascia and muscles primarily. What we found instead changed our lives forever. John Matthew gifted me with level 1 training. There, I was referred to the most highly trained therapist local to us to work on my child. It wasn't our first session that opened us up and changed the game, but it was the first session with our local therapist that was the game changer. Within the first two weeks following that first session with our therapist here in Atlanta, my child went from a 2-3 word sentence (diagnosed with speech apraxia at age 2) to a full 7 word sentence: "Mama, I want boots on, go outside." That

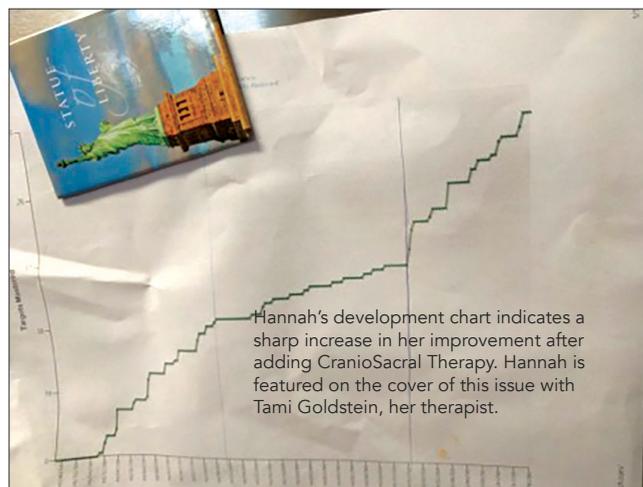
might not seem like a lot to you, but as a parent of a non verbal ASD child...that brought me to my knees. From there, she began learning language quickly. A speech evaluation revealed she was no longer apraxic. That was our first miracle with CST. The second six month re-evaluation with our developmental pediatrician adding in Upledger CranioSacral Therapy, showed a fourteen month developmental increase! The developmental pediatrician said "This is nothing short of a miracle."

I asked the doctor "does anyone ever get off the spectrum?" She replied "I never say never. It's very rare, but I have seen it happen." I replied: "OK, we will be one of those." Armed with a new level of determination and awe for the changes that my child was making, I continued to study and my child continued to receive CranioSacral Therapy. From there, I tracked down Tami Goldstein and asked her to come to Georgia and teach her class: Applications of Upledger CranioSacral Therapy, Massage and BodyWork for Autism. She too has worked on Hannah several times with amazing results. Tami's intra oral work improved her articulation significantly.

One year later, Hannah's ASD diagnosis was formally removed by the same developmental pediatrician that diagnosed her. She no longer met criteria for an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Caveat: We made many changes during that year in between the 14 month developmental increase and the full diagnosis removal and recovery. We removed her from the ABA school and placed her in a Pre-K class without special needs services where she excelled from being with so many fully verbal and neurotypical children. We also added to our therapy protocol NAET (Nambudipads Allergy Elimination Technique) and were able to get off the strict diet without regression. We have continued with speech therapy for residual articulation weakness.

No other therapies have been required since removing her from the ABA program in January 2016. She has completed a year of the young 5's class (between Pre-K and Kindergarten) and is now in Kindergarten at the local elementary school and functioning beautifully. Last month we went back to the developmental pediatrician for our final yearly follow up evaluation. She continues to be recovered and her scores fall in the normal ranges for her age and some excel beyond her chronological age.

Today, we live a very happy, grateful life. Without Upledger CranioSacral Therapy none of this would be possible. I will forever be grateful for the kindness and generosity of the collective team: John Matthew Upledger, Jackie Halderman, Mariann Sisco, Stan Gerome, Tad Wanveer, Shyamala Strack and Tami Goldstein. I cannot express enough how much our lives have changed because of each and every one of you. CST gave us the greatest opportunity for my child's brain to reorganize and heal itself. Thank you Dr. John Upledger for your research and work.



Hannah's development chart indicates a sharp increase in her improvement after adding CranioSacral Therapy. Hannah is featured on the cover of this issue with Tami Goldstein, her therapist.

This image is Hannah's documented development milestones according to the ABA therapy school. The bottom begins at her first day of therapy. The sharp increased line indicates when we added in CranioSacral Therapy.

Emily A. Francis is the author of The Body Heals Itself: How Deeper Awareness of Your Muscles and Their Emotional Connection can Help You Heal (Llewellyn 2017) and Stretch Therapy: a Comprehensive Guide to Basic and Assisted Stretching (Blue River Press 2013). She is the host of All About Healing on HealthyLife.net. You can find her at: emilyfrancisbooks.com