

# Deaf-Blind Perspectives

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## He Didn't Listen

"Why would you want to adopt him?" the neonatologist asked 8 years ago.

"He'll never be more than a vegetable," he stated.

But Alex didn't listen, and now he jumps and shouts and laughs and loves his family.

"Alex may not ever be able to leave the hospital," the doctor said 7 years ago.

But Alex didn't listen, and it's been 4 ½ years since he was hospitalized.

"Alex will never eat or drink again by mouth," the experts told us 6 years ago.

But Alex didn't listen, and today he's eating and drinking, his G-tube 3 years removed.

"He may never walk," the therapist said 5 years ago.

But Alex didn't listen, and today he walks, runs, skips, and hops.

"He's profoundly retarded, incapable of much learning," the psychologist said 4 years ago.

But Alex didn't listen, and today he is learning to read.

"Even if he is legally blind and won't keep his glasses on, why are you trying contacts?"

He won't keep those in either," the vision specialist said 3 years ago.

But Alex didn't listen, and those contacts (that he leaves in) have opened up a new world of discovery.

"We'd like Alex to increase his expressive language vocabulary to ten words," his Mom stated at the I.E.P. meeting.

The teacher for the deaf and hard of hearing laughed! "He will never be able to do that," she stated 2 years ago.

But Alex didn't listen and today signs dozens of words and understands over two hundred.

"Maybe potty training is beyond him cognitively," the therapist said 1 year ago.

But Alex didn't listen, and today he rarely wets himself.

So what will Alex be told he can't do next? Whatever it is, I pray that he won't listen.

And I hope that I won't either.

*Jack Kemper, Alex's Dad*



**Alex**

We should all be so determined when the odds are stacked so high against us. Alex has touched and continues to touch a lot of lives. We believe he teaches us all a lot about the wonders of life, love, laughter, determination, and the need for patience. We can only hope that the people who are in his future are willing to learn along with him on his journey.

*Jack and Linda Kemper*

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