

Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair McLain, and members of the committee,

My name is Kari Quigley and my family began our journey with OHSU's Child Development and Rehabilitation Center (CDRC) in 2014. At the time, I came to them in desperate need of answers for my young twin boys, who were showing signs of autism. After months of work to figure out the problem, I felt defeated in my pursuit to find out what was happening with my children. Prior to the CDRC, everyone I reached out to for assistance made me feel like I was crazy or a bad mom for talking about the behavioral problems that I saw in my children.

When we first arrived at the CDRC, I was ready for a battle - I needed answers, and I would not leave there without them. I had binders, folders, and videos documenting what I was experiencing with my boys.

Within the first few minutes of the evaluation, I discovered that I did not need to battle any longer. For the first time, I heard words that stick with me to this day: "Mom, it's okay. We understand. We see what you see and we're here to help you. You won't leave here without answers." Finally, I was able to breathe for the first time in two years. The CDRC validated that I know my children, and that I am not a bad mom.

As time went on and we spent more and more time at the CDRC, it became even clearer how much the CDRC staff cared about my family. On more than one occasion, staff came up to my children and said hello in the hallway. When my children didn't respond, the doctors complimented my children and made them feel at home. Nobody had ever treated my children with such respect.

In addition to the wonderful hospitality that we have continuously been shown by CDRC staff, my children have seen incredible results. I have five children, all of whom are autistic and receive services through the CDRC. My two youngest were both nonverbal for the first several years of their lives, but after consistent support, are now talkative young boys. I am confident that my family would not have seen such progress without the wonderful CDRC staff.

I owe a lot to the amazing team at the CDRC. From the doctors to the receptionist, they truly go above and beyond for the families they care for. The CDRC is my family's second home. Thank you for the opportunity to share my family's story. As you consider the many difficult choices in front of you, I ask that you remember that there are many other families in Oregon with similar stories, who are searching for answers just like I was, and need the support of the CDRC.

Thank you,

Kari Quigley