



# Informed & Connected

## Brianna

Brianna is my three-year-old daughter who was just diagnosed with autism and she is my world. When she was about two years old, I had a feeling something was going on with her. She wasn't meeting the milestones that other children her age should meet. I asked her pediatrician about it and we were referred to the Autism Clinic at Children's Hospital.

After getting her diagnosis, I was sat in an office and I was given a packet from the Children's Hospital but it was all in English. I did not know what I was looking at and I could tell that they knew that. They highlighted a page within the packet they gave me with resources and pointed to Families Helping Families saying that there is a Spanish-speaking staff member that could help me, or at least that's what I understood.

So the first thing I did the very next day was to call Families Helping Families but I really didn't know why I was calling. I just knew that I had to start somewhere, and I am so glad that I did. I spoke to Raquel Castaneda who immediately gave me so much information and offered to make an appointment with me that very same day. I work until 4 pm daily and I told her I would not be able to come in, but little did I know that I called on a Tuesday which happens to be the only day that FHF stays open until 8 pm. So I was lucky enough to get seen that night.

Through that meeting, I got so informed and got connected to places I had no idea existed. Raquel helped me through an ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) application, made a referral to JPHSA (Jefferson Parish Human Services Authority), and helped me understand the school system a little better. The next day I got a call from Raquel to confirm the JPHSA appointment, to confirm my ABA application had been received, and to help me get an initial evaluation from the Jefferson Parish School System for Brianna.

I am so grateful for FHF and so relieved they'll be here to help me all along the way.

*Elba Izaguirre*



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Changing Lives Every Day.