April 2016

God dag, Jens!

and Hello, good people of IAA!

Its been forever long and I can find only the lamest excuses for loosing touch in the last three (WHAH?!!) years. Seems like it was a life time away yet so many memories and totally life changing experiences…

Can I mend this? I hope so. Either way, I do want to share with you about our lives. IAA is still a name we use pretty often in our lives and, believe me, even 3 years after leaving it, it is a huge part of our family history.

Thank you for those initial hints you gave us before we left on how and where to look for services. The US, it appears, does not suffer from lack of ABA services, especially if you are in a bigger place/city. We did rather quickly find a center (after a few interviews, visits and such) here in Denver, called Firefly Autism. It reminded me a lot of IAA, except it is bigger (everything in the US is bigger :) and 98% of their clients are people with Autism. This was the first thing that made it look so different. No “client” diversity, if you may… but this is the problem with the American health care and funding. Autism is a big elephant here and seems like at this point only this diagnosis lets you into the door with ABA services. We squeezed in primarily based on the files YOU SUPPLIED US WITH. Dear people of IAA. Please know, that when we walked into that center and opened our folder with videos and charts, we were pronounced the most prepared parents they had ever seen. Both Paul and I were quickly qualified as ABA groupies and, it seems, by the amazing tradition of everyone in the behavioral world, we were made super welcome and at home.

…

Just reread what I’ve written and it sounds a bit off :), like I am bragging or something… But I think you will understand. I am just extremely proud of this (very) hard working boy. And feeling lucky and privileged to have had access to ABA when we first discovered we needed it. There are no miracles in ABA, and our story is no exception. ABA is  A LOT of  HARD work. Of kids like our Eli and people like you who love and work with kids through their tantrums and multiple failures. I do realize there is an element of luck in our story (..listen to me giving mentalistic explanations :):) he-he.. :) and no one knows what the future holds. But I wanted you to know that not a day has passed without us thinking about IAA and being grateful.  Eli is part Eleni, part Aina, Line, Tone, Jens and many others who have put in their efforts and skills to help him get to be the best he can. Thank you for that.

Just like always -

You Reinforce Our Bx, good people of IAA!!!

and happy spring to you all :)

~ Larisa and the rest of the Denver Sheperds