

Tyler's Story

“Tyler is an amazing little guy!”, said Karen, his Birth to Three service coordinator. *But that's not what his parents were told early in his life. After more than a decade of trying to start a family, Marc and Tina learned midway through the pregnancy that Tyler had developed congenital hydrocephalus – a dangerous increase in the amount of fluid surrounding his brain – and that their baby would likely have a poor quality of life. They were presented with the option of terminating the pregnancy, but decided to go forward.*

On the day Tyler was born, tests confirmed not only the hydrocephalus, but also a severely malformed brain. The Neonatal Intensive Care staff talked with Marc and Tina about getting early intervention, and Tyler was brought home eight days later. Over time, Tyler required brain surgery to drain the excess fluid from his head, as well as eye surgery to help correct congenital esotropia, a muscle imbalance.

*Despite being told that Tyler would most likely not walk or talk, **he has surprised and delighted everyone, including his team of doctors.** Tina and Marc began working with their Birth To Three team when Tyler was two months old. In addition to his Mom and Dad, his team consists of a physical and occupational therapist, along with his early intervention associate. They have been invaluable in helping to maximize Tyler's potential by providing feedback on areas that need particular attention. They also suggest the types of exercises necessary to assist in overcoming low muscle tone and developmental delays.*

Today, Tyler can hear, see, and walk, has a great vocabulary, and has overcome many barriers on his way to becoming an active 2-1/2 year old. He is very inquisitive and playful: enjoys his books, digging in the sandbox, drawing, playing in the pool, and visiting the library.

*Within the coming months, **Tyler will transition from Birth To Three to preschool.** Although Tina and Marc feel extremely fortunate with their son's outcome, they can't help but think of the many other families that are not as fortunate. **Thankfully, support is available through programs such as Birth To Three.** “I think parents play a big part in what their children can accomplish by being there for encouragement and support, including involvement with learning experiences” says his Mom. “We want him to do the things that other kids do: running, jumping and constantly learning new things that challenge him!”*