



Sharing our Success Stories

What happened?

Mary is eleven year old sixth-grader enrolled in a self-contained classroom for students with multi- disabilities and developmental delays. She is a happy individual who is eager to learn, and loves to be with people.

When my students are working on their money skills, I always encourage them to purchase something for their family, such as vegetables, bread, or fruits, so it can go on the table for family to share. It is important to encourage them to have a role in their families' life and they really enjoy it.

Mary enjoys drinking soda very much and she usually prefers soda over anything else. I was surprised to see one day during Community Based Instruction Mary chose candy over soda! When I spoke to her mom I said, "I did not know Mary likes this caramel candy over soda." Mary's mom looked at me and said, "She does not care for that kind of candy, and caramel is not ever her favorite."

Then mom said, "However, Mary's brother Jack loves that kind of caramel with cream in the middle!" Mary's mom told me, when Jack came home Mary gave him the candy. Mom was so happy and proud to see how wonderful her daughter cares for her brother and can express her feelings so beautifully.

Why is this a success story?

This is an example of a person with disability with limited communication who expressed her feelings toward others. Mary showed her kindness and love to her brother with one piece of candy. We all need to listen and watch what a person with disability has to say. I have learned these three things through teaching students with disabilities, endurance, patience and love.