



“The doctors said I couldn’t even have kids and here I am,” Savana said. “With a wonderful boy who doesn’t let anything stop him.”

Savana’s joy from becoming a mother when the odds were against her turned to anxiety around her son Milo’s first birthday. He was missing milestones, had not said any words and was avoiding eye contact. “As a mom and a teacher I knew something was off developmentally,” she said.

“

**“As a mom and a teacher, I knew
something was off developmentally...
Without this support, I’d still be lost
in translation.”**

Milo had very low muscle tone, affecting his mobility due to not having the same amount of resistance to movement. At seven months old, his head was still “floppy” as Savana describes it. After ten months he still wasn’t eating solid foods. He would sit for hours spinning objects, opening and closing doors, never interacting with anyone.

Then she got Milo’s diagnosis: Autism and a rare genetic variation that affects the white matter in his brain. “I am a woman of faith, I believe everything has a reason but it still came with heartbreak,” Savana said.

With clarity on Milo’s condition, Savana knew she had to get help. That’s when she found United Way Ready Children Impact Partner Brighton Center, who has been able to meet Milo’s specific needs in their classrooms. “Without this support, I’d still be lost in translation, googling what to do as a mom.”

With the support of trained therapists, not only did Milo have the assistance he needed in his early learning but Savana learned invaluable skills to help with his early development at home. They educated Savana on techniques that would make a difference at home. They even built a system of communication for her son. “He picked up the ‘eat’ card, put it in my hand, said ‘eat’. The minute he said ‘eat’ I cried because it meant he had a voice,” she confessed.

“Every week they came to my house. We would sit, reflect on what I learned and they’ve give me new strategies,” she says. “It was coaching and partnership, not just therapy. This support gave us a path, not just a diagnosis.”



Milo, now almost 3 years-old, is on track to enter a general classroom and receive special education services. Savana now understands his behavior, how it is triggered and how she can respond with compassion. More than anything, her family now has a path forward.

United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County's Ready Children Impact Partners offer programs that make a difference in the lives of young children and their families. These resources ensure that young children are ready for kindergarten, enter the world healthy in mind, body and spirit as they progress in their early learning.

"If you want to know where your donation goes, just know this: It gave my son a voice and gave me hope," Savana says.

“

“Every week they came to my house. We would sit, reflect on what I learned and they’ve give me new strategies. It was coaching and partnership, not just therapy. This support gave us a path, not just a diagnosis.”

To learn more about United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County's work and to hear more stories, visit uwsatx.org.