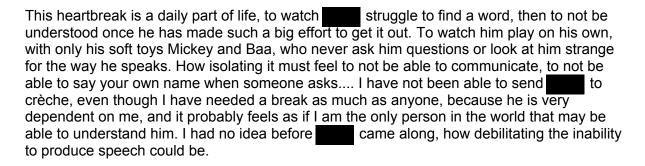


play with. This is absolutely heartbreaking to watch.



At the moment is under the guidance of a speech therapist through our early intervention program, but this is just guidance, not therapy. As this has made little verbal progress, and can be "temperamental" I can't be certain whether he would gain anything from typical therapy at this stage, but if cost was not a factor, I would be doing it on the chance that it would help even in a small way.

I would like to see severe communication problems be treated as just as important as any physical disability. I would like to see children whose parents can't afford speech therapy, not be at a disadvantage to the wealthy children. Also, before a child is put on a waiting list for speech therapy, I think they should immediately be assessed (under a doctor's referral/government funded platform). I would like to see the FACSIA/Better Start funding extended to include severe communication disorders, and if a child cannot communicate on their own, I believe that they should have access to an aide for kindergarten, as they need to be able to develop social skills and learn, just as any other children do.

I thank-you for the opportunity to have this input into your inquiry.

Kind regards,