



It's Not Denial, Its Hope!

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I've had the good fortune to learn more about denial than most parents of kids with disabilities. I not only lived it when my son was born and through his first 3 years but I've also studied it a bit. I know that denial buys us the time we need to absorb the information we receive that might be devastating. It's processing time so you can slowly accept whatever diagnosis, syndrome, or disease you were just told about and move forward.

And I know that there are stages of denial. The 1st Stage: When someone asks me if Jason should be walking by now, I say, "NO!" and walk off cursing under my breath. The 2nd Stage: When someone asks me if Jason should be walking by now, I say, "No, because he was a premie but now he's getting ECI services so he'll catch up and all will be well!" The 3rd Stage: When someone asks me if Jason should be walking by now, I say, "Well, Jason has Cerebral Palsy and it's going to take him a while to learn to walk."

I have also been told many times by medical professionals as they refer someone to TxP2P that "this family is in denial." Well, many of us were. When my son was born at 1 lb., 11 oz., and we were told he had a 10-20% chance of surviving, I was totally in denial. But each day he lived was a good sign. So slowly but surely the denial turned into hope. On one side, I knew the possibility that he could survive was low but he was still here so maybe he would be the one who made up that 10-20%. The neonatologist and other physicians dealt with each and every issue that came up. And we still had terrible, terrible days and nights but he continued to survive. So what started as denial turned into hope and helped all of us get through his ordeal. And aren't we all entitled to a little hope?

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