

Labeled & LOVED

January 2021 ♥ Issue 1

Special Needs
Inspires a
Special Love

"I WILL FOREVER
BE GRATEFUL..."

PG 3

MOMS
Helping
Moms

PG. 2.

A Weekend To
RESTORE **HOPE**

PG. 4.

IMPACTING MOMS FROM
26 STATES
AND CANADA



Our Mission

is to embrace and strengthen families with special needs by providing connective experiences and educational resources igniting personal growth and systemic change within the community.



Dear Friends,

Your support has brought to life our mission and has brightened the lives of families.

Labeled & Loved is dedicated to embracing families of all abilities,

building communities of support and demonstrating that regardless of a label they are loved.

Thank you for your willingness to support our mission.

Your Labeled & Loved Co-Founders,

Julie Hornok | United in Autism

Dr. Lisa Peña | MoChA Diaries

Dr. Regina Crone | Therapy & Beyond

Stephanie Hanrahan | Tinkles Her Pants

MOMS *Helping* Moms

JULIA MARIA REYES | ROUNDROCK, TX

LABELED AS: A mom of a child with autism

"When we got the diagnosis of autism, I heard a lot of *she won't* and *may not* about her intelligence and abilities, very heart-breaking for a momma of a 3-year-old. Jessa proved so many wrong, even though she is diagnosed with autism, intellectual disability, non-verbal, etc, she is one smart girl. She has proven that she can and will outsmart anyone, sings all her favorite songs, and can count to 20+!"

Julia has dedicated her time this past year as one of fifteen Support Sisters, facilitating a sisterhood circle group of moms. She offers support, encouragement, understanding and connects these women into a community.

Thank you Julia for making an impact at Labeled & Loved!



FOLLOW

Joy of Jessa

Labeled & Loved is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



Donate *TODAY!*



CHOOSE FROM THREE EASY WAYS TO GIVE

- 1 SCAN THE QR CODE ABOVE
- 2 USE THE PREPAID ENVELOPE INCLUDED
- 3 EMAIL HELLO@LABELEDANDLOVED.ORG



SPECIAL

Needs INSPIRES A Special LOVE

LABELED AS
A mom of a
child with
1q43q44
deletion
syndrome

FEATURED MOM: ABBY HEALEY | DENVER, CO

Parents of children with disabilities start out as typical expectant parents, with hopes and dreams and expectations for their child. But following a disability diagnosis, those hopes and dreams often shatter into uncertainty and fear. But as a new normal evolves filled with new hopes and dreams, joy can be found beyond the struggle.

We sat down with Abby, mother to beautiful daughters Shiloh (2) and Hattie (4). Her oldest, who was born with 1q43q44 deletion syndrome, not only transformed Abby's life into the role of motherhood but also into the unforeseen role of life-long caregiver.

What does labeled mean to you as a mom of a special needs child?

Being labeled as a "special needs family" was something that was hard to swallow at first. Others might look at our family and immediately label us, but the ones that take the time to get to know us find that this life we have is magical and so very special.

What does a day look like for you, that may differ from typical parenting?

Our day may look different and difficult to a typical family, but to us it's just a normal day. We have quite a few more steps to tackle each day, like:

- Critical daily medications
- Wheelchair transfers
- Daily dressings on her changing table
- Feeding through tubes each meal, which runs over an hour

As I'm saying this, it does sound difficult, but like I said, this is just our normal day! I pack up the wheelchair into our van to go to school, then after pick up our afternoon is filled with therapy:

- Appointments with one of the 10+ specialists
- Speech & language therapy
- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Vision therapy
- Hippotherapy

Hattie keeps us on our toes throughout the day, but she has shown us patience and gratitude. We never take a day for granted with Hattie.

“ she has shown us
patience and gratitude.
We never take a day
for granted...”

What encouragement can you give a mom whose child has just been diagnosed?

Take a deep breath. You are about to enter into this crazy world where you will never stop learning. I know this diagnosis is probably unexpected and maybe a little shocking. You might be grieving the life that you thought you would have. But, let me tell you something. This special life of your child is something only a few of us have the privilege of experiencing. You will experience a kind of joy that you never knew existed.

How is the Mission of Labeled & Loved important to you?

There are so many resources focused on our children [with disabilities] out there, however, not a lot of organizations focus on the moms, aka the caregivers.

Being a part of the Labeled & Loved mission has shown me that it's okay to focus on ME. After the retreat, I came back to Colorado with ten friends that I now call my tribe. We started a group text, and encourage and pray for each other every single day. A few of us landed in the hospital with our children right after the retreat weekend, and these moms wrapped around each other and supported each other. We brought each other care baskets, constant prayer, and were just there for each other because we all GET it! I give all of the credit to the Labeled & Loved Retreat and their mission because it truly brought us so close together.



LABELED AS
A mom of a child with autism,
cerebral palsy, epilepsy,
schizencephaly

"Spending the weekend with
incredible women who can
understand my heart just by the
look on my face because they
walk down the same **daunting**
but extraordinary road is
overwhelmingly beautiful. **The**
peace this weekend brought in
knowing I'm not alone was what
I needed to keep chugging
along this path of life! **I'm**
thankful for the conversations
and community." - Raigan S

A Weekend To RESTORE HOPE

LABELED AS:

A mom of a child with cerebral palsy,
intractable epilepsy, non-verbal,
non-ambulatory, G-tube dependence

"On Friday, my husband texted me
that he gave our son rescue seizure
medicine. By Monday we were in the
emergency room then admitted to the
floor. On Wednesday, he decompen-
sated and we've been in the PICU
since. **If I didn't go on that retreat**, I
wouldn't have the capacity to emo-
tionally deal with this. **The bonds** with
the other moms have helped me
through this admission. I will **forever**
be grateful for the retreat experience
but mostly the relationships I've built
with moms who completely under-
stand this rollercoaster of joy and
pain." ~ Janelle T





THE ELEPHANT *in the Room*

"I grieved for the self I used to be, [before the diagnosis of my child], surrounded by 200 amazing mothers in similar situations... they have become my circle of protection- my band of "elephants".

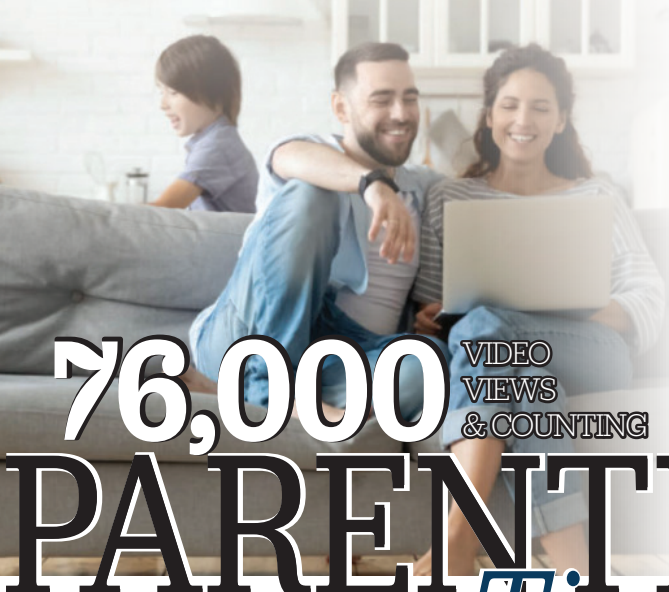
~ Bailey Jo Carmack, 2021 Retreat Attendee

Coming from as far as Canada and Hawaii, mothers gathered at the Labeled & Loved Retreat, many knowing no one and **desperate to escape** the loneliness parenting a child with special needs brings. But wisdom was found in embracing the symbolism of elephants to sisterhood. Genuine empathy is portrayed by elephants, even wincing when seeing another in danger, and when injured, the herd will back up, shoulder to shoulder to form a circle. Standing like a fortress they kick up dust and grass to protect her from predators. As the female recovers, the impenetrable wall of elephants raise their trunks and, in unison, trumpet to celebrate their "sister's" recovery proclaiming they are not a sisterhood to be messed with.

Labeled and Loved weekend's closing ceremony symbolized the protective circle of elephants. Each mom was invited to join the circle, reminded that sometimes they need to step into the middle and accept the protection of others, grieve and take time to heal. Sometimes they need to step back, form a circle of protection, and offer help and prayer.

With only the flicker of candlelight illuminating each face, the emotional moment was **filled with hugs and tears**. It was an unforgettable visual of the unimaginable stories these mothers live with every day.

The shift from motherhood to life-long caregiver is emotionally painful & the grief of watching your child struggle can be unbearable but together, shoulder to shoulder in sisterhood, we will stand.



EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES



Our video channel, Sunshine in the Spectrum continues to provide parents with practical tips for positively parenting across all abilities.

76,000 VIDEO VIEWS & COUNTING
PARENTING
Tips



2,813 RSVPS
IGNITING
Personal Growth

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Virtual & In-Person Mom's Mingle Events

Labeled & Loved Annual Retreats
~2021 San Antonio, TX
~2022 Daytona, FL

1,200 MINUTES OF INSPIRATION
EMBRACING
Hope

SHARING & INSPIRING

Our Podcast is growing and showcasing stories of hope, inspiration, and experts in the field. We have had special guests like Jen Hatmaker, Chris Norton, Temple Grandin, and more!

THE WORLD MAY LABEL BUT
WE WILL LOVE!

SUPPORT GROUPS

Faith & Friendship Circle
& Sisterhood Circles

The launch of Sisterhood Circles program has facilitated personal growth while caregivers get to meet others in small groups virtually.

Faith & Friendship Circle started November 2021 with 79 special needs moms registering for the first circle!

HEALING
Grief



263 TOTAL REGISTERED MOMS IN 2021

Giving with *IMPACT!*

IMPACTING MOMS FROM
26 STATES
AND CANADA

96%
FELT EQUIPPED WITH
VALUABLE
& PERSPECTIVE
& SUPPORT
TOOLS

97%

LIKELY TO
RECOMMEND
LABELED & LOVED
RETREAT

caregivers felt the sense of a

TRUE
SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY
AFTER THE RETREAT VS. BEFORE

236% *INCREASE*

MENTAL & Emotional Health

CONNECTED EXPERIENCES

Our virtual and in-person
Moms Mingles continue to
connect moms. Hearing how
moms have found their best
friends at our events stresses
the importance of community
with others who “get it”.

INTENTIONAL TEXTS

Sticky Notes for the Heart
continues to offer hope for
parents in the midst of their
most vulnerable days.

41,000 INSPIRATIONAL
TEXTS SENT
TODATE
WEEKLY
Inspiration

CHOOSE FROM THREE EASY WAYS TO GIVE



Impact a Life *TODAY!*

DID YOU KNOW?...

20,900,000

families in the U.S. have at least 1 household member with a disability

The divorce rate for
families with children with
a disability is over

85%

69%

of families say they are
concerned about being able to
provide lifetime care for their
dependents with special needs



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