

Labeled & LOVED

Jan 2023

Invisible Disabilities

THE STORY NO ONE SEES



*Finding a
Lifeline*

Impact a Life

**Dining with
Heart Gala**

OUR MISSION

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



Dear friends,

We are dedicated to embracing families with disabilities, building communities of support, and demonstrating that regardless of a label, they are loved.

Your generosity has enhanced the lives of countless families.

Thank you for your willingness to support our mission.

Labeled & Loved Co-Founders

Dr. Regina Crone | Therapy and Beyond

Julie Hornok | United in Autism

Stephanie Hanrahan | Tinkles Her Pants

Dr. Lisa Peña | The M.o.C.H.A Diaries

Moms Helping Moms

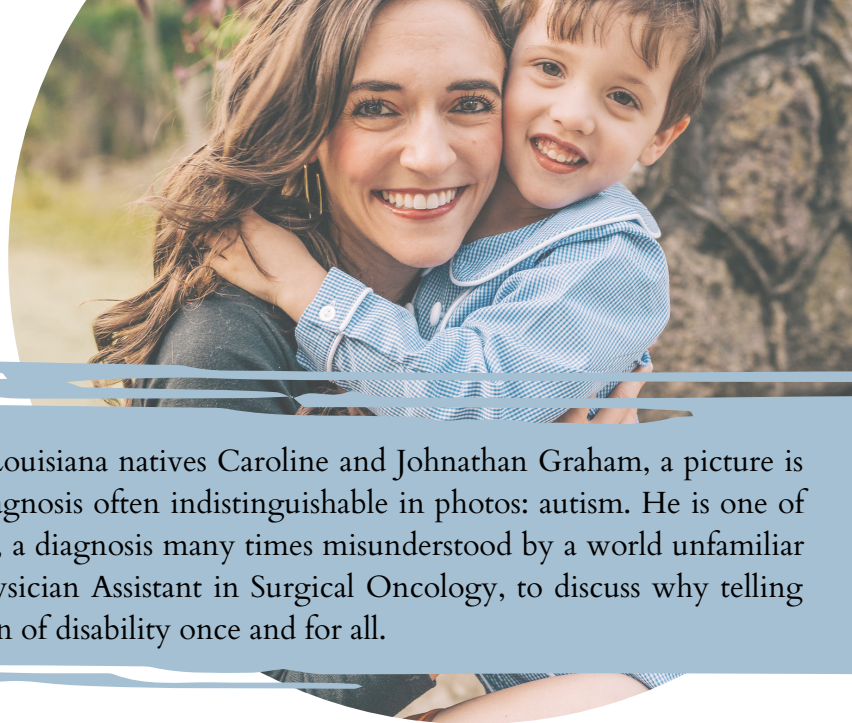


KARLY GONZALEZ

Karly is an elementary teacher specializing in GT classrooms. Her son Gavin was diagnosed with autism in 2021 and Karly sought out community in Labeled & Loved right away. She is now a Support Sister and leads a Sisterhood Circle and is a dedicated volunteer for the Labeled & Loved Retreat.

Invisible Disabilities

THE STORY NO ONE SEES



They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but for Louisiana natives Caroline and Johnathan Graham, a picture is only worth the story behind it. Their son, Jeff, has a diagnosis often indistinguishable in photos: autism. He is one of many children and adults with an “invisible disability”, a diagnosis many times misunderstood by a world unfamiliar with neurodiversity. We sat down with Caroline, a Physician Assistant in Surgical Oncology, to discuss why telling the story no one can see might just change the perception of disability once and for all.

What do the words “invisible disability” mean to you as a mother to a special needs child?

The words “invisible disability” aren’t foreign to me. In fact, usually once or twice a week someone will say, “Your child doesn’t look like he has autism.” That’s even what my parents said when I told them about Jeff’s diagnosis. No, Jeff doesn’t appear to have a disability, but if you really get to know him you will begin to see his struggles. And if you stay around long enough, you will also begin to see the light that shines from him.

It’s so incredibly important to tell the story no one can see. In today’s world it feels more acceptable to share a “perfect” picture rather than share the beauty, pain, and hardship behind the picture. Every time we are vulnerable, we risk being rejected. But we need to share because there are other moms out there who are dying for connection and don’t know where to turn to. We desperately need to know we are not alone.

What are your greatest hopes for your child after the diagnosis?

After Jeff was diagnosed, my dreams for him to be successful were thrown out the window. But those dreams were superficial.

You can be the most successful person in the world and be unhappy. I just want my children to love themselves, love God, and love others well. Hopefully they will find joy in doing so. That’s really all that matters to me.

How has the mission of Labeled & Loved impacted you?

I couldn’t name more than two moms with autistic kids on Instagram or Facebook before I went to the Labeled and Loved retreat. Now I know more than a dozen and consider a handful to be my sisters. I can call them at 11:00 p.m. crying and it wouldn’t be awkward even if I hadn’t talked to them in months. Labeled and Loved provided me with a retreat that changed my life. Only when you meet someone carrying the heaviness of your cross do you really feel seen, heard, and loved. I left that weekend as a new, confident woman. I remember telling somebody about my son’s autism when I returned home and it was the first time I realized I was confident and unafraid to talk about it. The women I met at the Retreat gave me a new sense of freedom.

Mom's Mingles

Moms Mingles were created out of the true necessity to offer respite and reprieve for caregivers of children with disabilities or special needs. These free virtual and in-person events are filled with games, prizes, inspirational speakers, and most importantly, opportunities to connect with other women who share similar circumstances.



What our moms had to say...

"I didn't feel out of place because everyone there was going through the same things...but, not everyone was at the same point in their journey as myself so, I gained a lot of hope & encouragement from hearing and meeting more seasoned moms."



Denver, CO

"I was nervous to attend due to social anxiety & just the fact that I never get out. But, I'm so glad I went, it was such a friendly environment, the room was filled with others just like me."

"I walked away with new friends and a bit more energy in my step. I am so glad to have had the opportunity to attend. If you get the chance, go!"



Tulsa, OK

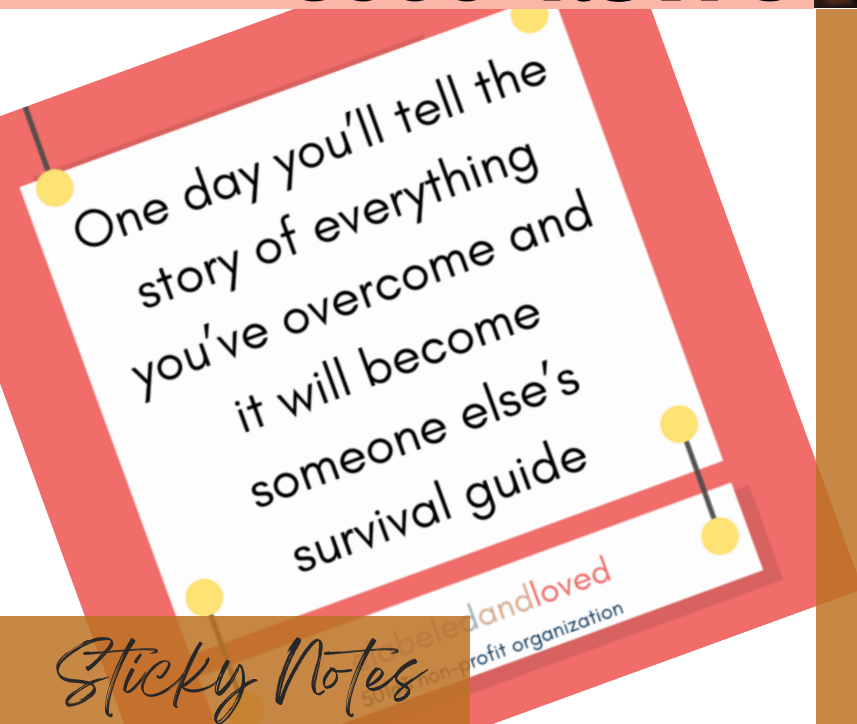
Programs

Our virtual events continue to connect caregivers—even from the comfort of their own couch. Often it's impossible to leave home when you have a child with a disability. These online events allow primary caregivers a chance to feel seen and included within their community and have resulted in many lasting friendship made.

3000+ RSVPs



Virtual Events



Sticky Notes

Sticky Notes for the Heart continue to offer hope for parents in the midst of their most vulnerable days with free weekly texts sent to each subscriber. They are little messages with big impact, reminding caregivers that they are not alone.

45,000+ texts sent

Building Community, Faith & Friendship

Sisterhood Circles provide virtual groups where caregivers can connect with other moms while being led through intentional content with their assigned Support Sister mentor. We offer Community Circles, which offers messages of healing and hope & Faith and Friendship Circles, which provides open discussion on grief and faith; all are welcomed.



IMPACT A LIFE

Today

DID YOU KNOW?

20,900,000

families in the US 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.



Choose from 2 easy ways to give



EMAIL HELLO@LAELEDANDLOVED.ORG
OR SCAN QR CODE ABOVE

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Training Moms to Lead Moms

TRANSFORMING PAIN INTO PURPOSE

"LABELED AND LOVED BREATHED LIFE BACK INTO ME... WE LEAD FROM A STANCE OF WALKING ALONGSIDE, NOT IN FRONT OR BEHIND"

301 caregivers RSVP'd in 2022 to participate in our Community Circles. Each month, caregivers gather virtually to connect with a person walking through a similar circumstance...

Volunteers like Ellen Herbert have made this possible. A mother and lifelong caregiver to her 21-year-old son with a disability, three years ago Ellen said yes to volunteering with Labeled & Loved. **Now she is responsible for training volunteer leaders to become Support Sisters for our Community Circles**, including one Circle specifically designed for the Spanish speaking community.

Our mission in action is "Leading moms to connect, walk together in grief, then heal together and find hope in even the most challenging moments that parenting a child with a lifelong disability can bring."



Labeled and Loved is so thankful for the many women who have followed Ellen in volunteering as Support Sisters. These amazing mothers to children with disabilities have joined our **leadership training program**, which has equipped them in finding strength within their own daily struggles as they lead others to hope by sharing stories, building a healthy mindset, and facilitating effective mom-to-mom support groups.

Through mentorship, these women are experiencing their own unchangeable circumstances being used to better the world around them. Ellen shares, "I train our Support Sisters to connect to their strengths, values, and passions so they can begin to see how **the pain they are walking through is actually what gives them purpose to help others.**"

Labeled & VED *retreat*

A 3-day weekend of hope for moms with children with disabilities

26
STATES
& *Canada*

- **96%** felt equipped with valuable perspective & support tools
- **97%** likely to recommend Labeled & Loved Retreat
- **236%** increase in the sense of true supportive community reported when comparing before to after the retreat



Colorado Springs, CO

October 13th - 15th



**REGISTRATION
IS OPEN!**



COMMUNITY ♥ RESET ♥ FUN ♥ FRIENDSHIP ♥ REST