

LIVE UNITED

United Way
of the New River Valley



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JACOB'S STORY

At 2 years old, Jacob was diagnosed with a language and speech delay resulting from Asperger's Syndrome, and, until the age of 4, was completely nonverbal. Through the years, this language/speech delay has made school challenging for him. Testing determined that his speech, reading, and language capabilities were approximately 2 1/2 years behind other students in his grade, and his teachers observed that the delay also affected his social skills. For many years, he preferred parallel playing to direct interaction with other kids his age.

When he turned 7, despite these challenges, Jacob joined Boy Scouts. Throughout the 8 years that he has participated since, his social skills have improved significantly. Now at 15, Jacob attends 8th grade classes at Christiansburg Middle School and is very outgoing, getting involved in activities with his Troop friends and introducing himself to others. Jacob's reading has also improved. He started reading his Boys Life Magazine last year and has decided that he wants to earn the Reading Merit Badge. This new interest in reading corresponds with significant improvement in his grades for classes involving reading and higher cognitive thinking. Until 7th grade, his grades in classes related to reading were consistently C's or D's. Last year, he was able to pass his first ever SOL and his last school progress report included entirely A's and B's.

At United Way of the New River Valley, we strengthen families and youth in our community. That's why we support agencies like the Scouts BSA, Blue Ridge Mountains Council. They prepare their members to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes using innovative programs that address the needs of today's families in communities across the nation.



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Scouts BSA, Blue Ridge
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around the New River Valley.**