



## How One Family Navigated a Successful Transition During a Challenging Time

Jimmy, a cheerful and adventurous 15-year-old with autism, had a strong bond with his father, Jim. When Jim, a children's book author and English as a Second Language teacher, passed away in a tragic car accident in 2021, Jimmy and his mother, Beatriz, were left in a state of uncertainty and hesitation about how to move forward with the developmental disabilities services system to adjust their blend of services to meet Jimmy's unique needs. Jim played a pivotal and primary role in his son's life, and for the family, by taking on the responsibility of navigating the system to obtain – and provide – the services needed throughout Jimmy's life.

*"[Ella] me escuchó pacientemente y empezó a darme soluciones como podiar ayudarme, y darme información que me podía ayudar."*

— Beatriz, acerca de su coordinadora de servicios, María

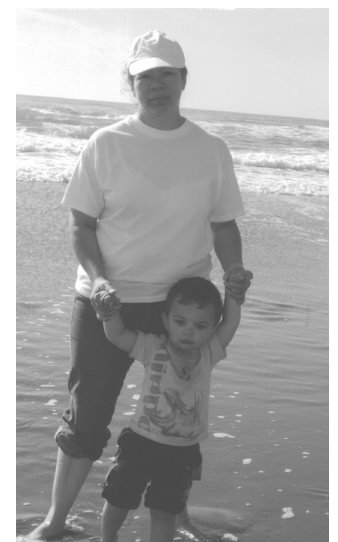
*"She listened to me patiently and began to give me solutions that could assist me, and helpful information."*

— Beatriz, on her service coordinator, Maria

After Jim passed away, Beatriz needed Spanish-language service coordination to enable her to navigate the regional center. Their prior service coordinator worked well with Jim, who was a native English speaker. But a change was needed for Beatriz, who was going to take over the primary caregiver role.

In partnership with, and through guidance from, Alta California Regional Center in Sacramento, Beatriz and Jimmy were able to begin a daunting, yet ultimately successful transition, during an emotionally challenging time full of new needs. Alta took the time to understand the unique needs of the family and the circumstance, first by supporting a transition to a new, bilingual service coordinator, and then putting a plan in place to meet the continued and new needs of Jimmy and Beatriz.

*"I'm really happy with all of the services I have now with Alta for the support they have given me during the transition. I saw a lot of progress, because I can breathe now," said Beatriz.*



## MARIA FOSTERS MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS AS A SERVICE COORDINATOR

Maria, a service coordinator at Alta, serves the Latino community and has a background in providing applied behavior analysis therapy within home and school settings, mainly for children with autism. Maria was assigned to Jimmy's case to provide support during this time of transition.

With patience and understanding, Maria offered immediate support and served as a vital resource to Jimmy and Beatriz. Maria's ability to connect with Beatriz provided a much-needed partnership and someone who could provide guidance in how to navigate the process of receiving developmental services more efficiently and effectively.



With Maria's assistance, Beatriz received more than 120 hours of respite a quarter to meet the family's unique needs. But Jimmy also needed a better school placement to meet his support needs. While she knew it would be positive, Beatriz was, naturally, still concerned about the change. So Maria went with her to 3 different schools, and Beatriz was able to both raise her concerns and have them answered. "It was really good support for me," Beatriz said. With that support, and the information she needed, she was able to pick the most suitable school for Jimmy. Now, he has on-site services that help him thrive, and Beatriz reports "he's really happy in the school, and he's really excited to go to the school every day."

Next up? Jimmy's ready to learn how to swim, and he always loved camping trips with his father. So Maria and Beatriz are working to set up access to much-wanted social recreation and camp services for Jimmy.

*"I'm looking to make lives easier, and more independent for clients...Families just need someone to listen and provide guidance. It's important to offer as much help as possible, help them learn how to access resources, always be available whenever necessary. And build trust and empathy."*

— Maria

Receiving support from Alta, and developing a strong and trusting relationship with Maria, has made a tremendous difference in the lives of Jimmy and Beatriz. Having access to a service coordinator who could meet the needs of the family has made a life-changing difference during what would be, even in the best of circumstances, a very challenging time.

Maria is just the newest member of a long list of people Beatriz is grateful for. "They are all involved in Jimmy's success."