



Charles Auer/Freeman Staff

Dawn L'Huillier plays music from an iPad with her daughter, Myah, on Thursday.

Myah's milestones

United Way makes a difference in Muskego girl's life

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MUSKEGO — A 6-year-old girl with blonde braids and a white dress sits in a chair in a Muskego kitchen. “Do You Know the Muffin Man” is playing on her special iPad and she starts to become agitated. Her mom, Dawn L'Huillier, looks at her daughter and speaks to her in a soothing tone.

“Myah, no whining. What do you tell mama?”

A smile forms and her eyes twinkle as she gazes at her mom.

“New,” Myah said.

Another song is selected and Myah starts nodding her head to the beat of the music.

The Muskego miracle

Born at 32 weeks, Myah has had an uphill battle. Dawn and Tim L'Huillier were not aware anything was medically wrong with their baby until the day after she was born. Myah was diagnosed with Down syndrome, cortical blindness and receptive-expressive language disorder.

“She has been through therapy, open heart surgery, surgeries on her hips, eyes, sinuses and intestines,” L'Huillier said.

Due to her cortical blindness and seizures, the neurologist told the parents Myah needed more therapy than what she was receiving. Myah was able to receive services through Vision Forward Association in Milwaukee with help from funding from United Way's Community Fund.

Myah attends Vision Forward four times a week; it has been an asset in her development and growth.

“Before Myah never used to communicate as well as she does now. People thought she was always sleeping since her head was down,” Dawn L'Huillier said.

The family is thankful to United Way and Vision Forward. Myah would not be where she is today without both organizations. Vision Forward physical therapist Lynn Harsh has worked



Myah L'Huillier rides an electric car that she can drive, but which has a remote control another family member can use to assist her.

extensively with Myah for a few years. Harsh said Myah can move in her walker between 25 and 50 feet. She is also impressed with her growing vocabulary.

Tim L'Huillier said his daughter is learning more and more words such as “please” and of course “new.” He lovingly describes her as a “chatterbox.”

A milestone for Dawn and Tim L'Huillier was Myah getting a motorized white car as a Christmas gift. It was the first gift that wasn't purchased from a special needs catalog.

Myah is dominant with her right arm and is able to operate the car when she is in it. The parents have a remote control which operates the car as well. Myah is able to ride the car outside with her cousin, who has a motorized car too.

The music in you

In the fall Myah is reaching another

Donation information

Donors to United Way are encouraged to give to the Community Fund. Donations are invested in a varied portfolio of programs that support the basic needs of everyone in the community. United Way focuses on education, income and health.

The following are community-wide initiatives:

- Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry Workgroup
- Financial Stability Initiative
- Health Improvement Fund
- Healthy Birth Outcomes
- Healthy Girls Initiative
- Helping Kids Succeed Initiative
- Individual Development Accounts (IDA)
- Milwaukee Community Schools Partnership
- Milwaukee Succeeds
- Readers United
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative

Source: United Way
www.unitedwaygmwc.org/Our-Impact/Community-Impact-Fund

milestone. She is transitioning into the Muskego school system. Dawn and Tim L'Huillier are preparing themselves for the huge step. They have met with the school many times and feel she is in good hands. Dawn L'Huillier said her daughter loves people and is more verbal than other special needs children may be.

Dawn L'Huillier's face flushes as tears roll down her cheek. She bites her lip and dabs at her eyes. With emotion in her voice she said Myah has completely changed their lives for the better.

“Just to see what she has to go through on a daily basis, she has fought since the day she was born and still does,” she said.

Her daughter's ability to face adversity has given her strength to provide whatever she can to help her along the way. Myah is highly motivated by music and movement.

“Hearing her sing along to ‘Happy Birthday,’ it melts my heart,” she said.

When she was born, doctors told her parents Myah would probably not be able to do much. Now with each milestone comes the realization there is probably not much the little girl in braids can't do.

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