

Linda's Story

My name is Linda and I have three sons, Simon, Mark and Jonathan.

Thirty three years ago when Simon was born my husband Dave and I were very excited and nervous becoming new parents and were unaware of the journey were about to embark upon

Simon was born three weeks early and his development was very slow. When Simon was six months old he was admitted to hospital with a febrile convulsion and when we asked the consultant if it had caused any damage, she replied that the damage was already done. These words are so clear to this day

Several series of tests were carried out to find a reason for Simon's developmental delay which all proved negative. Mark was born eighteen months later. It was soon after his birth that we discovered Mark had a heart murmur. He was monitored at the hospital and had heart surgery at the age of five to correct a narrow valve.

Having made the decision to have another baby for Mark to be able to bond with, Jonathan was born.



Jonathan having fun under the parachute!

It was during a check at hospital that we were told the news that Jonathan appeared to have the same developmental delays that Simon had. We were devastated but had to continue functioning for the family.

Where are we today? We have experienced so many challenges, highs and lows, both in the main stream and special school system. We have met some very special people on our

journey who have taught us so much about values, attitudes, patience and understanding but most of all we continue to learn from Simon and Jonathan even though they cannot communicate using words.



Simon at the Blue Planet

We engaged in a battle for two years to receive direct payments for Simon and Jonathan and won. We have employed personal assistants to take Simon and Jonathan out during the day, enabling them to access activities such as swimming at Uttoxeter baths and dimensions leisure centre, horse riding, college for African drumming and numerous meals out. On a Friday evening they can go to the youth club at the North Staffs Adventure Playground. Seems like a better social life than me.

Simon and Jonathan are not only coping with a learning disability they also have autism, epilepsy and visual problems and cannot communicate using words, but the smile I experience first thing in the morning is still priceless. We continue on our journey of discovery together which for us is a way of life all be it very different to most.