

Being the father of a child with special needs, I know how draining it is to take care of all that we do. My family was turned upside down when our five-year-old daughter was diagnosed with apraxia. With all the struggles my family faces, I have made it my personal mission to help as many families as I possibly can. From the day Mackenzie was born, we knew there was something wrong, we just didn't know what it was. There began my journey to find the answers, but all I seemed to find were more questions. I remember the day as it were yesterday. The doctor called me to tell me the results of her MRI, Mackenzie was only 4 months old. It was the single worst day of my life.

Although at the time I received the news I was surrounded by the hustle and bustle of



(Anthony & his daughter MacKenzie)

people in the office, I felt like I was all alone and the world had stopped. My mind was racing 100 miles per minute and nothing else mattered. We finally had found a piece of the puzzle, but there were still so many unanswered questions. I knew at that point, my life was going to change. The next five years of our lives were dedicated to finding more answers and at the age of five Mackenzie

finally received a diagnosis. She had apraxia. Mackenzie's diagnosis was a relief, but heartbreaking at the same time. We finally had an answer, but the life we had dreamed for her became a thing of the past. From that day forward, we began to educate ourselves on apraxia so we could help Mackenzie. This was a long process, as we not only had to educate ourselves we also had to educate the teachers on how to teach her. We had some good people working with us and Mackenzie has made some great progress, but those unknown years were long and hard. That is why I became an advocate for children with special needs. I realized that someone had to speak up for them so I decided that I would be the voice for those who couldn't speak up for themselves. Being a part of the MetDESK program has really opened my eyes to the many parents out there that are not aware of what needs to be done to protect their children's futures until joining MetDESK I did not know what needed to be done to protect my daughter's future. I want to help families make the process of taking care of their children a little smoother. My life experience with my daughter has enabled me to help families better because I have gone through or am going through similar experiences and I know how difficult it is dealing with the unknown. – **Anthony Recck**