

A Bus Stop Club Mother's Perspective

Life is not fair. It's particularly not fair to the child with a disability or disease. It's not fair to their able-bodied siblings, either. The whole family's life often gets rearranged to accommodate the special needs child. Just using the term "special needs" for one child can leave the siblings feeling like their needs really aren't so special. It's expecting a lot to ask a kid to deal with it gracefully.

When they were younger, my son and daughter were alternately concerned and horrified by their autistic brother. They are older now, and understand more about how he is. But knowing why he sometimes acts so differently, doesn't really help when we're at a school function or they have friends over to the house and things with their brother go a little haywire. It doesn't help when we have to pass on certain family events because they are too loud or too long for him to sit through. (Ever try taking a kid with sensory issues to a hockey game, or worse - the circus?)

My daughter loves her brother and knows we love her. She doesn't complain, but I know she's often embarrassed by his antics on the school bus, or disappointed when the spotlight should be on her but we are distracted.

I think the Bus Stop Club has given her a safe place to vent a little and gain some perspective. It's not all touchy-feely, mandatory sharing of feelings. She would not be comfortable with that. Brian and Jen have just created a comfortable situation where the kids are free to talk about things (or not) without worrying about what's the correct thing to say or do. They all relax over pizza and sports or crafts and have a lot of fun. She always looks forward to her Bus Stop nights.