

January 2024

Dear Friend,

In November, I sent a letter introducing you to Autumn. The progress she's made since then motivated me to share this update.

Autumn spent nearly a year and a half in the hospital following her premature birth. Once home, she began Early Intervention services in her family's apartment Monday – Friday with a six-person team of Easterseals therapists. Her mom, Tyler, witnessed Autumn start to feed herself, find ways to communicate, and take steps with support.

As Autumn became more mobile, she couldn't move the way she needed to in the confines of their apartment. She started her 2024 physical therapy sessions at Easterseals where she has access to large rooms, long hallways, and specialized equipment that are preparing her to walk. She's making gains in all areas – moving more confidently, jumping, using sign language, and eating new foods.

Tyler knows Autumn is ready to walk and that Easterseals is the best place to accelerate her progress – but she cares for Autumn full-time and does not have health insurance to cover therapies. She's not alone. Even for families with benefits, many children have needs beyond the limits of their insurance plan. **Easterseals DuPage & Fox Valley is the only local therapy provider that accepts Medicaid's modest reimbursement rate because we believe every child deserves to thrive.** Financial assistance for Autumn and hundreds of other families depends on donor support. Please join our commitment by making a gift.

Autumn will turn three in March and will age out of her home-based Early Intervention services that have been funded by the State of Illinois. **Your donation makes it possible for preschoolers to continue physical, occupational, speech-language, and feeding therapy services at Easterseals.** Ensure they have the extra support they need to achieve their goals.

January is a time to **SHOW UP** with renewed energy and purpose. I started this month, energized by Autumn's progress, and confident in our purpose to ensure children with disabilities and their families are empowered. Please continue your support of Easterseals DuPage & Fox Valley in the new year.

All the best,



Theresa Forthofer
President & CEO

eastersealsdfvr.org/donate



AUTUMN'S PHYSICAL THERAPY SESSION JANUARY 2024

Practices taking steps in a walker before pushing a shopping cart across the room



Uses sign language to ask for "more" Donald Duck



Plays basketball in a Universal Exercise Unit



Hugs her mom

