



Positive Family Intervention (PFI) Program

"I really think it saved my life!"

*This article first appeared in **Connecting**, Raising Special Kids' quarterly newsletter*

As a self-described 'older parent', Laura thought her difficulty keeping up with her son had more to do with her own age than with anything else. But when the school started calling with concerns, she realized there was something more going on. Their pediatrician referred her to a psychologist, and Laura's son was diagnosed with ADHD. Her son was later referred to a developmental pediatrician who confirmed a developmental disability.

As her son entered a new grade, Laura shared, "Fourth grade was really tough; tough for him and tough for me. I love kids! But I was having a hard time 'getting' my own kid. I found myself slipping into a deep depression and losing faith in my ability to be a good mom." Laura reached out to Raising Special Kids and described her concerns about her son's situation at school. When the discussion indicated Laura might benefit from a new approach toward managing her son's challenging behavior, she was enrolled in the Positive Family Intervention (PFI) program.

Laura admits she didn't fully realize what she was signing up for when she agreed to participate in the PFI program but she says, "It couldn't have come at a better time. I thought it was going to be

"I'm optimistic about the future. I know my son has lot's to give. It's a touchstone for me. I'm a better mother."

a class, but I didn't think it was all going to be for me. That was a complete surprise."

After her first PFI session Laura recalls, "I felt like I had won the lottery." As the 2-hour weekly sessions progressed, she compared the experience to rock climbing, "I gained purchase -- a handhold



so I could pull myself up. I really think it saved my life!"

Laura completed the PFI program and recently reflected on what she gained from the experience, "I'm optimistic about the future. I know my son has lots to give. It's a touchstone for me. I'm a better mother."

Not long ago, Laura faced a difficult meeting with the school. "It was challenging but I turned to the things I learned in the PFI program. I'm much more confident. You can't give someone enough money to buy the empowerment I gained from this training".

The Positive Family Intervention project was made possible by a generous grant from the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust



***Raising Special Kids** exists to improve the lives of children with the full range of disabilities, from birth to age 26, by providing support, training, information and individual assistance so families can become effective advocates for their children.*

Phoenix | Flagstaff | Sierra Vista | Tuba City | Tucson | Yuma

602-242-4366 / 800-237-3007
www.raisingpecialkids.org