

FACES OF AVTISM

If you've met one person with autism...you've met ONE person with autism.

Meet Hailey



Hailey is 3 years old and was diagnosed with autism when she was only 21 months old. She lives on a farm in northern Nebraska. Like many children with Autism, Hailey is simply not aware of danger. Hailey has trouble adapting to changes in routine and she can not stand to have her hand held. In fact, Hailey has a tendency to bolt which makes it nearly impossible for her and her mother to complete simple ordinary tasks like grocery shopping.

Meet Anise



Anise is a service dog trained specifically for people with Autism. Anise and Hailey met through an organization called 4 Paws for Ability. (www.4pawsforability.org)

4 Paws for Ability seeks to provide quality trained service dogs to people with disabilities without regard to age or severity of disability. The animal is trained to specifically address the needs of the child. Ultimately, Hailey's family had to cover the cost of training Anise.

This past December, after a 10 month wait, the family traveled to Ohio to join Anise for her final two weeks of training. Then the family returned home to Nebraska to start their life together!

Now two months later, Hailey & Anise are bonding well.



One of Anise's main areas of training is called tethering. Hailey wears a vest that is then attached to Anise's harness. Now when Mom needs to stop for groceries she has the option of taking Hailey and Anise with her. She can simply put Anise in a "down" position and no matter how hard Hailey might pull, Anise will stay laying down. No more issues with elopement!

Anise is also trained to track. Essentially this means search and rescue. The family practices tracking once a week and it is truly amazing to watch Anise find Hailey each and every time. This brings great peace to a family who has lived in constant fear about what would happen if their child wandered out of their sight. They now have an amazing resource at their fingertips to locate their child before she can find any danger.

Anise is also trained in Behavior Disruption. Right now they only use one of these commands--kisses. Anise does this on her own when Hailey starts crying or having a meltdown.

It has only been two months but life has dramatically changed for Anise, Hailey and the entire family.

