To Excel Beyond All Odds

JAUN VAN DER MERWE
(15 Years Old)
August 2014
NEUROLOGIST
→ Report showed: EEG was absolutely normal. No evidence of Epilepsy.

January 2015
READING SCHOOL
→ Report showed: Jaun is dominantly left.
  [Note: No reference was made to any learning barriers or other abnormalities because Jaun’s reading ability could not be tested.]

March 2015
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST
→ Report showed: Jaun is Cognitively Impaired

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<tr>
<th>Scores:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Verbal Scores:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;Vocabulary:</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;6 (Low average)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;Understanding:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;4 (Borderline case)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;Similarities:</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;0 (Cognitively Impaired)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;Numeric problem solving:</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;0 (Cognitively Impaired)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;Story Memory:</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;1 (Cognitively Impaired)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;Number Memory:</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;2 (Cognitively Impaired)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Non-Verbal Scores:</th>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;Pattern Completion:</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;1 (Cognitively Impaired)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;Block Patterns:</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;1 (Cognitively Impaired)</td>
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<td>&gt;Missing Parts:</td>
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<td>&gt;3 (Cognitively Impaired)</td>
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<td>&gt;Shape Plate (Visual org):</td>
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<td>&gt;3 (Cognitively Impaired)</td>
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<td>&gt;Visual Association:</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;0 (Cognitively Impaired)</td>
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[Note: The psychologist report stated that the chances are extremely slim that Jaun will ever be able to read and write one day.]
October 2015
PRIVATE LEARNING ACADEMY
→ Report showed: If Jaun receives individual/small group tutoring he will be able to progress at a faster pace.

[Note: This was the most positive response and this is what encouraged me to spend that amount of time with him.]

February 2016
EYE TEST
→ Report showed: Jaun is Colour Deficient and it is advised that he be referred to an Occupational Therapist for further evaluation.

NB:
★ When Jaun came to live with myself and my husband in January 2015 we took away all his medication namely Sertroline, Concentra and Risperdone. Also note that Jaun could not read or write when he came to live with us. [Letter from his current school in June 2013 refers to Jaun as Mentally Disabled and the diagnosis is irreversible.]

★ We only give Jaun Bio-Strath and Omega 3.
January 2015 – December 2016

Reading:
Jaun can:

✓ Read the 195 words he got to cut and paste as school homework in year 2015.
✓ Read 1000 of the 1000 Most Frequently used words /“Sigwoorde”, I received after I googled some different types of Curriculums.
✓ Read very short easy stories as part of his homework in 2016.
✓ Read time from an analogue clock as part of his homework in 2016.

Writing / Spelling:
Jaun knows and can spell, write (and read) the following:

✓ The 195 words he got to cut and paste as school homework in year 2015.
✓ 750 of the 1000 Most Frequently used words (“Sigwoorde”).
✓ His name, surname, address, age, and Wynand’s cell nr.
✓ The name of his School, Teacher, Head Master, as well as my name, his mother and grandmother.
✓ Days of the week.
✓ Months of the year.
✓ Number names up to fifty (one, two, three, etc.)
✓ Numbers up to 100 (1, 2, 3 etc.)
✓ Read the 300 words used in the ‘Sanlam WOW Spelfees 2016’ Grade 2 level.
**Maths:**

Jaun can:

- Count in 2’s to 200 (forward and back)
- Count in 5’s to 200 (forward and back)
- Count in 10’s to 200 (forward and back)
- Count in 3’s to 60 (forward)
- Count from 1 – 100 (forward and back)

Jaun knows:

- The halving of 1, 2, 4, 8, 10, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100
- Combinations of 10 (e.g. 9 and 1 = 10; 8 and 2 = 10, etc.)
- Numbers before and after (e.g. when counting in 2’s, 5’s, 10’s, 3’s, 1’s – what comes before and after and in-between)

**JAUN’S CHALLENGES**

😊 Calculations – he needs a number line in order to do adding and subtracting calculations.  
[He does have an Abacus, but for some reason he makes lesser mistakes when using the number line.]  
He also uses his fingers to count.

😊 Understanding – he still needs to grasp what he is reading when a sentence/story is long and not short and easy. He also needs to understand numeric values.
Brief overview of the type of words Jaun can read and write

- verkeersdepartement
- verkeersbeampte
- parallelogram
- verskillende
- sekuriteit
- restaurante
- parkering
- padreëls
- ambulans
- brandweerwa
- polisieman
- familiekamer
- veearts
- tandarts
- stetoskoop
- skaatsbord
- rekenaar
- mikrogolf
- Suid-Afrikaanse
- wimpers
- wenkbroue
- vensters
- shampoo
- verdwyn
- boeie
- geboue
- karretjies
- blokkies
- paadjie
- speletjies
- handdoek
- broodrooster
- wasmasjien
- koffie
- hardloop
- inspuiting
- medisyne
- woonstel
- briewe
- winkels
- skryfbord
- speelgrond
- sandkasteel
- buffel
- kameelperd
- seekoei
- oggend
- wêreld
JAUN’S FUTURE

😊 Home-school at a Centre.

Jaun will be joining an Impak Centre as from February 2017.

LESSONS LEARNED

☐ Belief in your own assessment of your child.

☐ Do your research.

☐ Have a growth-mind set.

☐ Never give up hope.

IN CLOSING

In order for any child to make the most of his educational journey as well as his future, it is very important that parents should have a growth mind-set.

The two most critical descriptions of Jaun in reports/letters, are Cognitively Impaired and Mentally Disabled (also stating it is irreversible) and as a result (in my opinion), Jaun was branded as ‘retarded’. If I had a fixed mind-set, I would have accepted these letters/reports and Jaun would never have been able to make progress and improve his potential and ability.