



## The Right Fit

by Gary and Emily Vonada

**Finding a daytime program that provided a safe and welcoming environment** was our main priority when searching for options as Mitch finished up high school. Mitch's teacher had heard of DEAR and recommended we visit. Mitch began attending soon after and has been there for over three years.

**In DEAR we found both a warm and friendly social setting** for Mitch and the medical support that would meet Mitch's needs and provide us with peace of mind. The staff is caring, competent and concerned about his wellbeing.

**Mitch likes to be around people** and enjoys the voices and sounds of the activities at DEAR. The social interactions with both his peers and the staff are an important part of his day. He seems happy to sit next to his friends and be part of the group. He loves music and can play a mean maraca!



## An Emanuel Syndrome Journey

by Carolyn Reese Teifel

**Born in 1983, Barak's chromosome diagnosis was refined to Emanuel Syndrome.** Some of his differences include: limitation of extension of knees and elbows, stiff ankle joints, scoliosis, severe kyphosis, seizures starting at age 7 years, osteoporosis, poor swallowing due to low muscle tone, prominent or malformed shoulder blades, an impaired immune system and mild to moderate drooling.

**In 2004, a Shriners' surgeon inserted rods** in his back to improve his posture

and functions of internal organs. He has been in the hospital with pneumonia multiple times. To reduce choking, Barak is fed puréed food and thickened liquids. He is not able to talk, walk independently or care for himself and takes several medications.

**Barak is a loving and patient young man** who enjoys social interaction, guided exercise, community outings and music. We are so thankful for the **DEAR** program where wonderful staff members provide outstanding care for our son.



Please remember DEAR in your estate plan.

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