

# FAMILY MATTERS

## KRISSY PLAETZ'S STORY



Krissy was born a healthy child on November 30th, 1973. At age one, Krissy had a stroke that paralyzed the right side of her body. She was unable to move or make any sounds because of the many medications she was taking to control her seizures. Being a foster child with a disability, Krissy's life was off to a tough start. "Catholic Charities called us about a child that was up for adoption. They failed to mention that she had a disability," Krissy's sister LuAnn looks back, "I was three at the time but I can still remember seeing Krissy lying on a bench, unable to move. We brought her home and fell in love with her." Krissy joined the Plaetz family on April 25th, 1975. Her life was about to change for the better.

Name: Krissy Plaetz

Primary Diagnosis: Stroke at age one

EasyStand Owned: EasyStand 5000 Youth

Previously Owned: EasyStand Junior

Age: 33 years old

Residence: Adult Group Home

Location: Litchfield, MN



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“Krissy was denied [the stander] originally but after a few letters describing how tight her legs muscles became, the paperwork was resubmitted and funding was approved!”

### COMING HOME

Krissy went to her new home and quickly became an important member of the Plaetz family. She and her sister LuAnn grew very close. “One of my earliest memories was just lying beside her on the floor looking into her eyes,” LuAnn recalls. Now it was time for Krissy, with the help of her family, to work on improving her health.

### LEARNING TO MOVE

Krissy was taken to Gillette Children’s Hospital in St. Paul, Minnesota. Her physician was able to help wean her off some of her seizure medication. Krissy slowly began to learn how to move around the house by putting her left hand on the floor, sitting on her hip, and pulling herself along. Over the next few years she would continue to improve.

### MODELING STANDING

Krissy became stronger and her mobility increased. Around age sixteen she was able to start a standing program using the EasyStand Junior. In 1990, Altimate Medical asked her to model in the stander. Even though the EasyStand Junior was discontinued shortly after, Krissy continued to use her EasyStand for the next ten years. LuAnn comments, “The EasyStand has helped Krissy to be able to stand in an upright position. The way it stands her up gradually is so important.”

### GROWING “Up”

“Krissy was a model for one of the very first EasyStand standers for kids, now she has a more grown-up stander,” mom Grace says. After using the EasyStand Junior for many years, Krissy finally grew out of it and her body started to react from not standing. As days went by, her leg muscles began tightening up. In 2000, her family decided to purchase an EasyStand 5000 Youth so that she could continue her standing program. “She loves the EasyStand. Loves it, Loves it. She wore out her first stander and now she is on her second,” Grace adds.

### FUNDING OBSTACLES

Krissy had a great case manager who worked very hard on getting funding for her EasyStand 5000 Youth. Because Krissy was now an adult in her twenties, it became harder to get funding for a second standing frame. Krissy’s mom, Grace, remembers, “Krissy was denied originally but after a few letters describing how tight her legs muscles became, the paperwork was resubmitted and funding was approved!” When they appealed, the case manager & family expressed how standing helped Krissy as a child and how her strength declined after not standing. The insurance company was convinced that standing was beneficial to Krissy’s health, and would save them money in the long-run, so they approved funding for the stander.

**CHALLENGE:** OBTAINING FUNDING FOR STANDER AFTER A DENIAL

**SOLUTION:** WORKED WITH A GREAT CASE MANAGER TO APPEAL WITH LETTERS SUPPORTING THE BENEFITS OF STANDING. RE-SUBMITTED PAPERWORK AND FUNDING WAS APPROVED.



Krissy modeling in an EasyStand Junior in 1990

**CHALLENGE:** LEARNING TO MOVE AFTER BEING IMMOBILE FOR SEVERAL YEARS.

**SOLUTION:** REDUCED MEDICATION AND BEGAN STRENGTH TRAINING WITH A PHYSICIAN. STARTED A STANDING PROGRAM TO KEEP LEGS STRETCHED & BODY HEALTHY.



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### KRISSY TODAY

Today Krissy is a thirty-three year old woman who lives in an adult group home in Litchfield, Minnesota. She has three roommates and is very happy there. Krissy loves when her nieces come to visit or when she gets to go visit them. Krissy also goes to Proworks, which provides adult day training and habilitation services to persons with disabilities. At Proworks, she is able to use switches to turn on electrical appliances such as vacuum cleaners and mixers, just to name a few. “Many times Krissy stands in her EasyStand while operating switches,” Grace comments, “She also likes listening to music and watching TV while standing.”

### STAND UP AND SMILE

Krissy has been using her EasyStand 5000 Youth for about seven years now. She stands at least two times a day for forty-five minutes or longer. “It is great to see her standing, she feels so tall. It means so much to me,” Grace says, “We get to see her pretty smile, and she sure smiles when she is standing!”

### A LESSON IN COMPASSION

Krissy has been blessed with a caring family who strives to help her make the best of her abilities. But it was Krissy who made the biggest impact on them. “We are delighted that Krissy is part of our lives. She has taught us all a wonderful lesson in compassion,” LuAnn adds, “None of us would be who we are without her influence in our lives.”

**STANDING PROGRAM:**  
2 TIMES A DAY  
45 MINUTES OR LONGER

**MEDICAL BENEFITS:**  
MAINTAIN STRENGTH  
STRETCH OUT LEGS

**PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS:**  
FEELS TALL  
SMILES PRETTY  
VISITS WITH NIECES

**STANDING ACTIVITIES:**  
LISTENING TO MUSIC  
WATCHING TV  
OPERATING SWITCHES

**SUPPORT TEAM:**  
FAMILY  
PHYSICIAN  
CASE MANAGER  
ROOMMATES

