**Who Is Brett Cordova?**

Please forgive the length of this informational paper. I have found over the years that it is helpful to the various individuals who work and educate or spend time with Brett that they have an idea of who Brett is, what he’s capable of and where his challenges and strengths lie.

Brett:

Has no maladaptive behaviors. Not aggressive. Very passive. Struggles with self-confidence and self-advocacy. He has very few “autistic” behaviors. Can appear typical but odd.

Brett cognitively is at about the 8 or 9 year old level in most educational and developmental areas. His full scale IQ is 51.

Brett’s most significant challenge outside of his cognitive ability is his speech and language deficits. His expressive and receptive language challenges can make it difficult to understand what he is saying (you can ask him to slow down or repeat himself if you don’t understand him). His receptive language is challenged because he has a pretty low vocabulary in general. He also struggles with auditory processing and memorization. He seldom realizes or understands or is capable of creating a picture in his mind of a new word or concept unless reviewed and repeated often. His Verbal IQ is 44.

Has great difficulty in group instruction/conversation/social situations of 5 or more. Loses focus and attention, therefore can and **does** miss important instructions, cues, idea’s and conversation. Tip for insuring that Brett is “present and focused” is to begin most instruction/conversation etc. with the phrase: “Brett, it’s time to listen”.

Will try to use as little language as necessary. Needs encouragement to use full sentences. Getting better but because he is using longer sentences, his intelligibility becomes the bigger issue. Conundrum!

Can run low energy. Not hyper at all. We augment his energy with diet coke and a protein of some sort.

Flexible in most situations but does appreciate notification (written or verbal) of changes to schedules, activities etc. Appreciate using calendar to note upcoming events

Very tenacious and enjoys figuring out solutions to problems and will continue until job done.

Unable to understand time concepts such as “25 minutes from now, every other day/week/month, 45 minutes ago, last week, two weeks ago, etc. Due to this his time management skills and ability to judge how long a task/chore/activity may take or estimating how much in advance to prepare for activity or outing needs adult supervision and assistance/reminders.

Unable to determine lowest denomination needed when making a purchase or determining correct change necessary to receive back from a purchase. May leave house for activity requiring money without insuring he has correct amount of money in wallet.

Loves fast food and hates fruits and vegetables of any kind (gag reflex)

Can prepare simple meals in the oven or microwave. (Baking chicken strips and French fries, microwaving popcorn). Has simple household chores such as laundry, feeding animals, making bed, dusting and emptying trash that require continuous adult oversight, instruction and assistance.

Easily redirectible

Playful and has sense of humor

Still believes in Santa Claus!!!

Enjoys camping, horseback riding, biking, swimming. Good to great at lots of sports but doesn’t always understand rules of games. Has great eye to hand coordination so great at batting, kick ball etc. Not great at fielding.

LOVES praise and responds favorably. Strong motivator

Easily distressed if discovers he’s done something wrong or displeased an individual. Will want the relationship repaired before moving on.

Empathetic to others

Understand most actions (good or bad) have consequences

Understands before and after (if you do this then we can do this)

Loves elephants. Really likes animals of all kinds except chicken, roosters and bats! Enjoys animal environments like zoos, circus’, Marine World, farms.

Loves shopping at Target or Wal-Mart or Toys R Us.

Loves to go to movies

Has wide variety of DVD’s and watches a lot during the day during down time

Has and uses I pad to Google, you tube etc.

Doesn’t really enjoy arts and crafts, singing or dancing…but will participate if forced

Hates amusement park rides

Is discouraged from inappropriate behavior in public (school, work, community) such as flapping, weird giggling, jumping etc. A simple reminder that that behavior is weird, that nobody else is doing that and that he has his own room to do that as much as needed.

Incapable of keeping a secret or lying

Good at sharing and wanting to be a leader

Can be a bit overly dramatic. Over exaggerating an “emergency” or boo boo.

Brett has a terrible phobia about anything medically related like doctor’s appointments, hospitals, medical appointments, dentist appointments, shots etc. Becomes anxious and agitated. If he happens to hear someone talking about their own medical issues or appointments, Brett becomes nervous and afraid that they are talking about him having medical issues or doctors appointments.

Brett is afraid of getting old and dying. He is afraid of him family dying and he is unwilling to discuss living outside of his family home. Brett becomes agitated and scared.

Gets hurt feelings when scolded severely or realizes someone is not happy with him. Will continue to repair relationship until he knows everything is o.k.

Can be a little “OCD”-ish (needs to make sure drawers closed, cupboards closed, and lights off) before leaving for a destination. This is not encouraged at home. This has presented as a danger to himself during practiced emergency drills at home. Becomes distressed, confused and agitated if not allowed to “complete” his routine. Also, if Brett forgets something in the house like his cell phone during a fire drill etc, insists on going back in the house to retrieve regardless of danger.

Although instructed to never answer the front door, if persistent knocking or door ringing, Brett will open front door or look outside window to see who is there regardless if individual is known or unknown to him.

Due to poor judgement, unable to determine stranger danger .

Does not pay attention to surroundings when out in the community. Unable to identify or recall where he is or has been in respect to streets, cities etc.

Unable to utilize public or private(like Uber/Lyft) transportation independently without adult supervision. Falls asleep on bus and in Uber vehicles, shows poor judgement in where to sit in proximity to others. Brett is unable to verbalize or advocate for himself if a bus, taxi, uber etc is late or never shows up.

Unable to acknowledge or understand that any person whether known or unknown to him could harm him, lead him to danger or manipulate him.

Brett is unable to make a decision or choice independently. He becomes agitated and confused. Will ask that other’s decide for him or choose for him even if HE does have a preference (like a food or meal choice, leisure activity, future life choices such as where or how to live, goals, work etc)

Unable to identify a “real” emergency vs a inconvenience. On the only occasion that we attempted to leave him by himself as he waited to be picked up by family for an outing, family member forgot to pick him up. Brett waited at the kitchen table for 6 hours before I came home (unaware of the mix up). Brett failed to call me to notify me that he was still waiting and also never left the kitchen table to eat or go to the toilet.

Although various attempts have been made to teach him to safely cook on the stove top, due to his inability to judge correct temperatures or “doneness” and his agitation in just waiting for a pot to boil etc, he is not allowed to do so in case of emergency.

Needs adult supervision when bathing to control safe water temperature. Also needs supervision in using self-hygiene products like shampoo, hair gel, toothpaste to determine correct amount.

Unable to determine when a toothbrush should be replaced. Unable to determine when or how much medicine to take independently. Like aspirin or dr. prescribed medicine when necessary.

Tends to shuffle his feet when walking and needs reminder to pick up his feet.

Very polite, happy and cheerful.

Not mean.

Great memory for most things.

Calls people his friends but doesn’t really understand difference between real friends and classmates.

Ability is usually greater than his disability.

Brett doesn’t get to choose what he will or won’t do. He MUST try all activities. If he can’t do something…that is acceptable. If he WON’T do something, that’s not o.k.

Brett understands facial and body language and social cues a little. If you’re not pleased, don’t look pleased. If you don’t understand, look confused.