

**Our Family and Austin Independent School District
Care Coordination through the Special Education Department & Davis Elementary School**

My name is Yanira Bonilla-Ocasio. I am here on behalf of my family, Jorge Ocasio (my husband) and Alfonso Ocasio (my son). In 2008, my family moved from Puerto Rico to Austin, TX. My son enrolled in Austin Independent School District (Austin ISD) at the time he was diagnosed with Bipolar, ADHD, and Oppositional Defiant Disorder, because of the many challenges Austin ISD'S School to Community Liaison, Ms. Sandy Cummings & Austin ISD Rep. Naomi Tafoya recommended us to Travis County Community Partners for Children (TC-CPC). Here we received a written Family Plan that included Care Coordination through Austin ISD and Children's Partnership. Austin ISD Care Coordinator, Anna Aguallo helped us to navigate through Community Services and Educational Services. Before Travis County Community Partners for Children (TC-CPC) we had no guidance to know how to help our son in the school setting, community and our home.

When we began to receive Austin ISD Care Coordination services through Special Education with Anna Aguallo, the family team helped us to identify specific services my son needed and also identify critical areas so that he can become successful regardless of disabilities. She (Anna) provided dually active communication between family and school, for example participation in Special Education Admission Review and Dismissal meetings (ARD's,) staffing and bridging us with Austin Itinerate & Administrative Support Persons. She was an active communication liaison for our family.

The services allowed our family to grow into a more positive, structured and became educated in the specific areas of our son's disabilities. Anna has the sensibility to understand our family and son in our home and school settings. She (Anna) understands the sense of urgency every time we call or need an answer in a short time. As a Care Coordinator she (Anna) had the tools to deal with challenging situations. Knowing policy and procedures within Austin ISD and her ability to be Strength Based was vital to this position.

In conclusion, our family would like to thank Austin ISD Special Education Department & Davis Elementary for giving us the opportunity to work with Care Coordinator Anna Aguallo. We hope that Austin ISD can help other families in need of Care Coordination. With these services our son is now more successful in school and community and we as parents have learned how to navigate the systems in Austin ISD and Travis County.

The above-mentioned words do not make enough justice on all the hard work between Care Coordinator, Parents and other Austin ISD representatives who truly partnered toward the goals for our son. No family should have to do this alone and in Austin ISD, we found TRUTH in the word TEAM. Thank you

May 13th 2010

Subject: Letter of recommendation for Anna Aguallo

Dear team members from Travis County & CPC:

We would like to acknowledge the good-hard-smart work from a team member that has touched our family's life. I couldn't stress enough how delicate and volatile is the environment but I can tell you the difference this person has made in our quality of life in 7 months. The team made it possible, meaning that Ms. Naomi Tafoya and Christina Khuen played a vital role that allowed Ms. Aguallo to keep up the good work. Of course, there are more people that we might not know that we should also be thankful for supporting us but since Anna is our day-to-day contact person, she is the recipient of our praise today.

We are about to be relocated in a near future and we wanted to express the value of the work done. Ms. Aguallo is a very professional person, truly committed and a good listener with the action where she puts her words. While in meetings with the school district, adequate questions and recommendations were in place allowing a better management of our son's IEP. In addition to administrative abilities, Ms. Aguallo has a balanced judgment, yes, the temperamental judgment needed to deal with other people's decisions and practices to be realigned according to the child's needs without stepping in somebody's toes: very smooth, very talented. I wish she could move on to a position in which she could influence others to the same and to lead by example.

In brief, Ms. Aguallo deserves more than this few lines of recognition. And the reason why that results around my son are not casual, changes made allowed progress that we, as a family, are enjoying every day.

Please, join us to take a brief moment and recognize those people who help families and not always hear about the outcome of their work. Again, thanks to Ms. Anna Aguallo and also the unknown heroes at the Travis County & CPC team.

Truly yours,

 
Yanira & Jorge J. Ocasio

Parents of Alfonso E. Ocasio (ID.2120618)

cc: Ann Jenkins
Naomi Tafoya
Laura Pivatto