

A Story of Hope—The Johnson Family

Thank you, Dante! Because of you.....

16 years ago, our lives changed forever when we heard the words, "Prader-Willi Syndrome". I know every family will never forget diagnosis day. For us, we were sitting at Mac Master Hospital on my husband's 30th birthday when we were given news. What we didn't know is how we would react, what we would do and how we would survive this new path. Keegan just started a company and I was a teacher. We really had no idea what to do but we did make a choice that day. We decided to "choose to believe" that we could make a difference in Dante's life. A few months later, I booked a park and we decided to host a walkathon that we called, 'One SMALL Step'. We connected with a few like-minded parents and one year later, FPWR Canada was born in 2006. Our PWS community started to grow and gain momentum. One walk turned into a few more walks, then a gala, then a golf tournament and then a few more walks. As the years went on, we met creative and determined families all over the world at different conferences who joined our mission (to eliminate the challenges of PWS through research). Our one walk turned into 65 walks, multiple galas and golf tournaments all over the world. It has been an incredible journey that resulted from that one choice we made in the hospital 16 years ago.



Dante has taught our family more than I could ever imagine. We've had our ups and downs like any family and we have made so many mistakes along the way but the past 16 years have shaped who we are. It has pushed us to do more. It has given us a purpose and enriched our lives.

Because of Dante, I became a Special Education teacher and I LOVE my job more than anything.

Because of Dante, our family has learned about patience, perseverance and determination.

Because of Dante, we have learned how to let go and focus on things that matter.

Because of Dante, we laugh louder and we dance like no one's watching.

Because of Dante, we eat healthy and exercise daily.

Because of Dante, we started www.lets.go.fit to help people of all abilities to get fit, make friends and have fun.

Because of Dante, we started Let's Go Fitness to help people of all abilities find their career pathway.

Because of Dante, we have met Michelle Obama and Bill Clinton.

Because of Dante, we have made friends all over the world that help us deal/cope with the daily challenges and that inspire us to keep going.

Because of Dante, we have worked with other families to run events and raise millions of dollars to fund PWS research so that all people with PWS can live happy and FULL lives, free of anxiety.



Dear Dante and all of his friends with PWS: Thank you! I am forever grateful to you for making me a better person and for helping me discover strengths I never thought I had. I promise to continue to look for answers and to inspire families to find their hidden strengths because our PWS community is made up of SUPERHEROS and I know that together we WILL eliminate the challenges of PWS.