



CASE STUDY



WHOLE FAMILY
NEUROFEEDBACK

NeuroOptimal Neurofeedback® training is the natural, safe, and effective system of training the brain to grow more flexible and resilient. Our clients, both young and old, find improvement in their mental acuity, focus, and creativity. They feel more confident, calm, and comfortable. Those with chronic conditions experience a greater ability to live healthier lifestyles. By utilizing NeuroOptimal's® revolutionary approach to neurofeedback training, Whole Family Neurofeedback helps clients unlock their brains' potential.



WHOLE FAMILY

NEUROFEEDBACK

Location

Continental U.S.

Type

Brain Wellness & Training

Website

wholefamilyneurofeedback.com

“Coupled with patience and love, the brain training was able to transform their North Carolina home to a safe and calm environment in which the children can continue to heal from the abuse and neglect that has so dramatically impacted their lives.”

Background

Tammy was raised by her grandmother and grew up in a home which frequently hosted neighborhood children. “My grandmother had already had 13 children, but she raised me and my two brothers as well!” With a strong family life, she quickly realized her love of helping children and progressed from babysitting as a teen to helping struggling children as an adult, first as a Guardian Ad Litem, then as a therapeutic foster parent. Tammy says she’s “glad God put the hard ones in her life.” She says “she really feels it has made her look...that God knew she’d never quit.”

When she got the call one Sunday night that 3 little girls needed emergency placement, she and her husband were ready to go. Tammy fostered, then adopted these three sisters: Ashlyn (now 13 years), Savannah (now 12 years), and Abigail (now 11 years). She has had the girls in her care since they were 5, 4, and 3. As is common with therapeutic foster placements, the girls all had special physical, emotional and behavioral needs as a result of severe past abuse and neglect. But even Tammy’s extensive experience and training, both personal and professional, could not help her girls flourish in the ways they needed.

Problem

ASHLYN

Ashlyn, being the oldest, is a natural leader, with a strong spirit and the determination of a mama bear. But some of her personal problems created hurdles for her that at times became insurmountable.. Starting with her sleep habits, Tammy found that she could help Ashlyn very little if at all. Ashlyn would wake up 5 and 6 times every night--and not just wake up. She’d get up! She’d walk around the room and house, play with toys, pester her sisters ...you name it. Without ever feeling rested, she wasn’t able to hold a positive mood which cascaded into problems with friends, teachers, and being able to even attend the extracurricular and team activities she loved. She’d end up attending a few of the first practices, and then her emotional turmoil and difficulty self-regulating would be so insurmountable that she’d have to quit. It was just too hard on her and the rest of the family.

Before trying neurofeedback, Tammy used all of the resources at her disposal to help Ashlyn to no avail. Ashlyn fought every type of help offered to her. Tammy saw no improvement from these years of effort.

SAVANNAH

Savannah, as a middle child, was incredibly empathetic and would go to great lengths to make her sisters feel comfortable and happy. Her concern and worry for others could reach an extreme level. It caused problems for her sisters and for Tammy. To manage her own discomfort, Savannah would rock a lot and intensely. There was also extreme fidgeting, and she would scratch and rub her face and ears to the point of scabs and burns. Tammy says, “her legs never stopped,” even at rest and during sleep. Savannah, like Ashlyn, would wake several times a night, and was unable to get adequate rest.

Tammy used everything at her disposal to help Savannah as well. Nothing seemed to shift the pattern.

ABIGAIL

Abigail, being the youngest, perhaps had the farthest to come. Due to the neglect and abuse she experienced, she would be overcome by emotion and would get lost in tantrums that would last for

hours, lashing out and screaming.

Tammy struggled to help Abigail while preventing her meltdowns from hurting others, but eventually the violent nature of Abigail's behavior necessitated her removal from the home. Abigail was placed in a long-term care facility for about a year.

TAMMY

While struggling to keep Abigail at home and to care for Ashlyn and Savannah, Tammy felt incredibly overwhelmed and unable to provide the care that the girls needed. Despite providing a wide range of therapeutic options for the girls, Tammy saw little improvement. She described her difficulty in coping with the stresses of daily care, saying "I go from Mama to Irish Banshee in 2.7 seconds." Recognizing the need for an additional form of help for the whole family, Tammy decided to explore the options that Whole Family Neurofeedback provided for in home brain training both for herself and for the girls.

The family had begun their at home neurofeedback training one week prior to Abigail's return home.

Enter Neurofeedback Brain Training

The family received their neurofeedback unit on a Thursday afternoon. The system arrived with both written and video instructions, and Tammy kept in regular contact with Whole Family Neurofeedback for any additional support that was needed. The girls were ready and happy to start their brain training sessions. Tammy brought them one at a time into a room she had set up special for their neurofeedback. They listened to the music and watched the screen. Tammy kept a notebook to jot down anything they were feeling. She noted that they "mostly just felt relaxed" and that "Savannah just about fell asleep" she was so relaxed.

As the girls continued their sessions, they very quickly began to ask for a "hook up," any time they felt stressed or worried. Tammy noted their differences as the month progressed.

Moving in the Right Direction

ASHLYN

Ashlyn experienced dramatic improvements in her quality of life and ability to cope. Neurofeedback sessions helped her to feel more calm by promoting a greater sense of relaxation and comfort. One of the family's primary concerns was Ashlyn's poor sleep habits, and when I asked if neurofeedback had helped her manage her sleep better, Tammy exclaimed: "Yes! Yes! Yes, oh my God yes!" While she does still experience tossing and turning, she is now able to sleep through the night, waking up feeling refreshed and ready for the day. Ashlyn also experienced an increase in curiosity and has been able to gain enough focus to read, and to share the things that she's learning with her family. The family's second major concern was Ashlyn's inability to regulate her moods. Tammy says now that "she is just calm." With this increased resilience, she



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is now able to attend activities without the emotional meltdowns and turmoil she used to have. As a result, her level of self-confidence has become much more stable, and she has been able to integrate into the family with greater maturity.

While Ashlyn used to resist EMDR therapy, she's become open to the possibility that the therapy may help and has begun participating. Tammy notes, "We are taking it slow...but we are on our way."

SAVANNAH

As with her sister, Savannah saw a dramatic improvement in sleep habits. Tammy was delighted to see the increased amount of rest, remarking, "Savannah even slept through a thunderstorm the other night. I normally have three little heads at my door."

Savannah's face and skin wounds are now completely healed, and she is no longer fidgeting and scratching. Like Ashlyn, Savannah has found enjoyment in reading and is able to finish a book now, which felt impossible before the neurofeedback. She is also able to read instructions all the way through and is able to follow them.

ABIGAIL

Abigail returned home from the long-term care facility about a week after the family began renting a NeurOptimal® Neurofeedback device. Tammy was concerned about the transition, but she had been doing her own neurofeedback sessions and felt more prepared to respond as the calm parent she really wanted to be.

Tammy began offering the sessions to Abigail and found her more relaxed immediately. As Abigail saw her family improving with the help of the NeurOptimal®, she became more and more open to the "hook up." With more and more sessions through the month, she became more self aware, quickly developing an ability to notice when she's feeling stressed. She specifically asks now for neurofeedback at those times. Tammy has noted a dramatic increase in calm moments with Abigail, and her therapist recently concluded a visit with, "I just had the most productive session I've ever had with her."

Abigail no longer screams for hours and is much more self aware. Her self regulation skills have shown improvement and she is able to sleep better. Most dramatically, however, Abigail is now living at home and is no longer violent towards those around her.

TAMMY

Tammy has experienced a much greater resilience to stress and has committed to her own neurofeedback sessions going forward. She is in the process of purchasing a NeurOptimal® Neurofeedback system from Whole Family Neurofeedback for her family and has started graduate school to become a therapist. As a Therapeutic Foster Parent, her new awareness of neurofeedback as a powerful tool for kids like hers has propelled her to deepen her work with this population. She is now able to take a greater role in promoting her own mental wellness and to spreading it to those whose lives she touches.



**Relax.
Train.
Optimize.**

Conclusion

After trying a wide variety of options, Tammy and her children found remarkable improvement in their daily lives through NeurOptimal® neurofeedback brain training. Coupled with patience and love, the brain training was able to transform their North Carolina home to a safe and calm environment in which the children can continue to heal from the abuse and neglect that has so dramatically impacted their lives. Tammy was able to bring all three girls to a point of increased rest and calm. The girls are now able to sleep well and show improvement in their daily functioning, and Tammy has noted a decrease in resistance to therapies designed to help the girls move on from the traumatic events in their past.

