

Inside Our Minds: What Parents of Children with Brain Injuries Wish You Knew



My child has a brain injury. That means my family has experienced something incredibly traumatic, something that's hard to explain, and impossible to fully understand unless you've lived it. And honestly? We don't expect you to understand it all.

But if I'm being real... it's exhausting to try and explain everything all the time. There are things we wish you just *knew*, even though we realize you couldn't possibly, unless we spelled them out for you. So, here goes.

Things I Don't Tell You

I wish you knew that trauma lives in the body. My nervous system is constantly on high alert, and I'm not always "okay," even when I say I am. If I seem off, or not quite like myself, please be patient. Be kind to me on the hard days. Be kind to my child on theirs. Love is powerful, sometimes even more powerful than medicine.

If I push you away, please try again another day. If I say, "I've got this," please offer to help anyway. Invite me to the event, even if I rarely show up. Don't let me drift into isolation. Come sit with me, even if it's just to talk about normal, everyday stuff.





What Support From Friends Can Look Like

You might feel unsure of how to help. I get it. I feel that way too, and I'm *living* it. But support doesn't have to be grand. Bringing over a meal? That's huge. Making dinner for a family is no small feat, and with my child's extra needs, it takes things to another level.

If you can help with my other kids, know that it's deeply appreciated. When we're at therapy, or in the hospital, my other children often have to adapt in ways that make me feel guilty. Helping them helps me more than you know.

Celebrate small victories with me. My child's milestones may look different, but they're just as meaningful.

What Support From Family Can Look Like

"I wish my in-laws would learn more about the diagnosis on their own—I hate having to carry the load *and* educating everyone as well." – Anonymous Parent

Support can look like doing a little homework. Learning about my child's condition shows me you care. You might be surprised to learn that my kid wants to be treated like any other child.

Yes, they have unique needs, but they also have joy, curiosity, and so much to offer the world.

Want to make a real impact? Offer to help with chores. It may sound small, but sometimes it feels like I'm carrying the world. Or go big: ask me to teach you how to care for my child. Whether it's feeding, changing, or just playing, **learning how to help gives me the rare gift of a few minutes to breathe.**



The Reality Is...

Being a caregiver is a full-time job— one that often replaces the paid job we used to have. That brings a financial strain few are prepared for. And let's be honest: living in 2025 is *already* expensive before you add in adaptive equipment, out-of-pocket therapies, and endless medical bills.

Some families are just trying to keep the lights on, the water running, and a roof over their heads. That's why organizations like **Team Luke Hope for Minds** are lifesavers. They step in where the system falls short, providing real support, real resources, and real hope.

It's a club no one asks to join, but once you're in, you're surrounded by people who *get it*. And that, in itself, makes a world of difference.

Sincerely,

Inside the minds of parents caring for their child with a brain injury