

Rainbow Client John Mitchell

By Kimberly Paetzold, Editor

John Mitchell came to Rainbow Rehab when he was 17 years old. A victim of a motor vehicle accident, he was seated on the passenger side of the car when it was broad sided by another vehicle. John sustained a severe TBI.

John was admitted to Rainbow September 18, 2001 in the Oakland Pediatric Program, but soon transferred to Rainbow's Stoneham residence in Ypsilanti early in 2002.

"When John came to us, he had major medical issues to overcome," stated Debbie May, Residential Program Manager of Stoneham House. "He came a few years ago in the summer because he needed to visit U of M Hospital on a regular basis; John had a VP shunt, Osteomyelitis in his foot and was on IV and oral antibiotics. He also had increased tone and spasticity."

With a lot of hard work invested by John's family, medical professionals and the Rainbow Rehab staff, John has been able to make great gains, which include:

- A move from complete tube feeding to consuming some soft pureed food.
- Family visits over the weekend.
- Consistent use of a standing frame. When John first started he could not consistently tolerate being on the tilt table. Now John can stand for 30+ minutes.
- Active participation in his therapies including appropriate command response.
- Practicing with feedback switches as a step towards augmentative communication.
- Use of some hand gestures.
- Appropriate response to stimulus. When John first came us, he only responded to discomfort or pain. Now John smiles and laughs and often looks towards those speaking to him.
- Verbalizing on the phone when he hears his mother's voice.
- Reduction of medications. When John came to Rainbow he had a myriad of prescriptions, and now he's down to using only an anti-seizure and antispasticity drug.
- The ability to bear half of his own weight.

"John's therapists and family have played a huge part in his recovery and he is now able to go home for weekends" stated Debbie May. "When he comes back to Stoneham house after being home, John is always really happy." John's family and the Rainbow staff are hopeful he will be able to go home permanently this summer 2005. His family is working towards creating a barrier-free home with amenities that will meet all his special needs.



John & his mother Laura