

# An Inspiring Tale

The first word that pops into Braden’s mind when he thinks about KidsAbility is “support.”

Coming to KidsAbility for 17 years groomed Braden for his current volunteer role with Spinal Cord Injury Ontario in Hamilton where he mentors individuals who have a newly acquired spinal cord injury.

“When I was 16 months old, my mom and I were in a car accident. All of a sudden all the things I could do, I couldn’t do anymore — things like walking and talking,” Braden says.

Braden was referred to KidsAbility by McMaster Children’s Hospital after the accident. It was here, where people like his therapists Sharon and Carolyn became an integral part of Braden’s childhood, teaching him just about everything. “I gained much mobility, confidence and independence because of them. It was hard work, but they made it fun,” says Braden.

Among the favourite memories Braden has of KidsAbility is when he learned how they made casts for his orthopedic braces most commonly referred to as AFO’s (ankle foot orthosis). He loved to pick out the designs for them.

Braden was named a Kids Can’t Wait Ambassador for 2003–2004. “I loved all the ambassador work. I met so many cool and inspirational people, and other kids my age as I grew up trying to make friends and connections. I shared my story at many events.”

The one thing Braden would tell a new client at KidsAbility is: “Take as much in as you can with what the therapists teach you...it’s an amazing atmosphere there.”

Initially going to Sheridan College for Film & Media, Braden is currently focusing on his health – going to the gym a few times a week and taking part in activities at home. He is thinking about exploring the avenues of writing, poetry or storytelling to inspire others with his story. Other than that, he just wants to travel the world as much as he can.

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*Braden Martz*

Kids Can’t Wait Cambridge Ambassador  
2003–2004