



Kris, Logan and Nathan Pieske

I am honored to share my story “ A Mother’s Point of View” on what it is like living with a child who has arthritis. Our son Logan, the oldest of our three children, was diagnosed with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis when he was 11 years old. The following is a glimpse into our life and how this “invisible disease” has affected my family.

In May of 2009, Logan was doing what he loved most when he injured his knee joint; playing baseball. The slide into third base was a life changing event, unbeknownst to us at the time. Months of therapy, followed by a knee surgery and still no improvement. Logan’s knee continued to be double the size of the other. We were then sent to St. Louis Children’s

hospital where we were given his diagnosis of JRA in his knee. We were also informed that, by now, he had fluid in over 10 additional joints in his body and this auto immune disease had no cure. This news was devastating.

Knee injections began immediately, medicines were abundant and Logan vowed this disease would not stop him from playing baseball. For 15 months, we attempted to get this disease under control, unsuccessfully. Logan was sick most Saturday’s from medicine side effects, wanted to stay in bed on most cold or rainy days and playing baseball took its toll. Every three months we would go for his doctor visits and nothing had changed. There were days I questioned if Logan’s disease was worse on him physically or his parents emotionally. We reached our “rock bottom” in January of 2011 he woke up with extreme knee pain and asked for help walking to the restroom. Something had to change. No parent should ever have to see their child suffer.

This feeling of helplessness for us and Logan living this way is unacceptable. A new treatment plan began for Logan in February 2011 and he started receiving weekly injections to control the JRA.

Three years ago, Logan was completely healthy and I knew nothing about JRA. The last few years I have witnessed the challenges of what should be simple tasks for him; buttoning buttons, opening jars, using a butter knife and handwriting. Logan has arthritis in all of his fingers.

Today, I continue to give him weekly injections and I am elated to announce that Logan is doing very well and is so close to being in remission; he is also playing baseball on two teams! Logan is no different than any other child his age, he just endures more. This disease has taught me to not worry about little things. My only wish is to have a healthy family. I have learned so much about myself and what’s really important in our lives.

The Arthritis Foundation came into our lives right away after Logan was diagnosed. Through Juvenile Arthritis events we have met other parents with similar struggles and Logan has met other kids who have arthritis. We have found support through the Foundation and the people we have met are proven to be the ones who truly identify with what we are experiencing. We are so grateful for this network of friendship.

Continued research provides advancements in medicine. We need a cure for this painful, life changing, invisible disease. Logan is close to remission because of medical advancements and answered prayers. It’s that simple. We respectfully ask for your support in hopes to find a cure for all children who live with arthritis. The Arthritis Foundation is working toward that cure. Please consider joining us at the 2012 Arthritis Walk on Friday, May 11. To register your team or make a donation visit www.arthritiswalkstl.org

Logan, Team Pieske, The JRA Destroyers, invite you to walk with us in honor of every child, every person who suffers with arthritis. These individuals are all true HEROS.

*Kris Pieske
Logan’s Mom*