

Family Raising Twins with Special Needs Twice as Grateful for Jill's House

Family Spotlight: Meet The Tupponce Family

Make a mental list of everything involved in caring for an infant. Then imagine the infant is a fifteen year old girl. Then repeat. If the thought makes you feel overwhelmed, you're beginning to empathize with Luther and Jabij Tupponce. Their daughters, Avesta and Genevieve, are identical twins with Angelman's Syndrome.

"They're missing the chromosome that allows you to speak, think deeply, and solve problems," explains Jabij. "They have poor fine and gross motor skills, poor balance, an abnormal gait, and a seizure disorder. Their care is really demanding, and they need it at the same time. Getting them ready to do anything is a production.



Avesta (left) and Genevieve enjoy their weeknight sleepovers at Jill's House.

"Usually, when the girls are home, my husband is with one and I'm with the other--helping them eat, take medicine, clean up, brush teeth and get ready for bed. And my son eats dinner alone," said Jabij. "But, when the girls are at Jill's House, we can eat together. I also sleep better when the girls are at Jill's House and wake up the next morning feeling refreshed.

"The school night program has been a lifesaver for our family. When we're in the middle of our care routines, I don't have time to think about how much we're doing. We just do what needs to be done. But when I stop--when we're not responsible for every aspect of their care--I think, 'Wow! We do a lot!' Respite is a big help to us.

"The Angelman's Society tagline is, 'I may not speak but I have much to say.' This is certainly true of my daughters. They have infectious smiles. Every time I see them, like when I pick them up from school or from Jill's House, it's as if they're seeing me for the first time. They smile from ear to ear and give me hugs and kisses. They've also taught me about forgiveness. After I make a mistake or lose my temper, they're quick to assure me--with a hug or a smile--that it's OK.

"We're so grateful to be their parents, to be the ones who get to care for them. I once heard someone say, 'God only gives you what you can handle.' I believe He gave us our girls because He knew that with His strength and the help of His people we could handle it. Jill's House gives us the chance to rest and recharge so we can be better parents for all three of our incredible kids."



The respite you provide helps Luther and Jabij Tupponce be better parents for all three of their incredible kids.