



We never told him...

My son Joey was born with club feet.

The doctors assured us that with treatment he would be able to walk normally, but would never run very well. The first three years of his life were spent in surgery, casts and braces. By the time he was eight, you wouldn't know he had a problem when you saw him walk.

The children in our neighborhood ran around as most children do during play, and Joey would jump right in and run and play, too.

We never told him that he probably wouldn't be able to run as well as the other children. So he didn't know.

In seventh grade he decided to go out for the cross-country team. Every day he trained with the team. He worked harder and ran more than any of the others. Perhaps he sensed that the abilities that seemed to come naturally to so many others did not come naturally to him. Although the entire team runs, only the top seven runners have the potential to score points for the school.

We didn't tell him he probably would never make the team, so he didn't know.

He continued to run four to five miles a day, every day, even the day he had a 103-degree fever. I was worried, so I went to look for him after school. I found him running all alone. I asked him how he felt. "Okay," he said. He had two more miles to go. The sweat ran down his face and his eyes were glassy from his fever. Yet he looked straight ahead and kept running.

Two weeks later, the names of the team runners were called. Joey was number six on the list. Joey had made the team. He was in seventh grade. The other six team members were all eighth graders.

We never told him he shouldn't expect to make the team. We never told him he couldn't do it...so he didn't know. He just did it.

Kathy Lamancusa