

# What's it Mean to You?

*“Getting an iPad is one of the most influential things that happened in my life.”*

Jaise Northam, Grade 10  
Aspergers student  
Coralwood Academy



Jaise Northam isn't your typical teenager. When he's not in school or doing his homework, he composes music, works on his now 450 page novel, or ponders the mysteries of the universe, like black holes. Like many individuals with Aspergers, Jaise is incredibly gifted in some areas even as he faces challenges in others.

Face to face communication is particularly demanding. Reading another person's face is like decoding a foreign language, explains his mother, Michelle Northam. Another challenge is handwriting. "It will take me twice as long to write a sentence as it will the 'Neuro-typical' person," Jaise says, "and at the end, the writing will look really bad anyways. Because I have fine-motor control issues, writing is difficult."

When Jaise received an iPad two years ago, a new world opened. Suddenly he had a way to communicate more fluently, take class notes, do homework, and organize his day. By the end of the week, Jaise had about 20 friends from school on his new Facebook account.

"I made new friends and became closer with old ones," Jaise remembers. "The frustration I once had with trying to connect with people wasn't as strong anymore."

Michelle recalls the difference the tablet made in her son's life: "He would come to me and say, 'I've never talked to this person and now they want to talk with me.' He just kept saying, 'I can talk to people at school now!'"

"My grades shot up," Jaise remembers, "not only because I was communicating my answers more clearly, but the quality of my work increased because I wasn't so concerned about making it look good on paper."

Jaise's experience shows what technology can do for learning disabled students, but the 1.2 million iPad apps designed for education cover a spectrum of learning styles. Thanks to a Planned Gift to the Alberta Conference made by Mary Kryswaty for education (see facing page), the Conference is able to help its schools throughout Alberta to purchase iPads. Coralwood has purchased several.

For Jaise, the iPad was life changing—a way to connect with the world and show what he can do: "I will always be thankful for what it does."—Glen Graham

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