

Our Vision for Lily

“Kindergarten Permaculture”

Our daughter Lily, is, like most 5 year olds, entering kindergarten in her neighborhood school this fall. She’s so excited to be an Anywhere bear. On our frequent passes by the school she’ll often say proudly, “There’s my kindergarten!!!”. Lily’s also a little different because of her rare condition, Williams Syndrome. In the classroom Lily requires and responds well to support services including special education. She will always have WS. It’s not going away.

Permaculture?

The father of permaculture, Bill Mollison, says, “Permaculture is a philosophy of working with, rather than against nature; of protracted and thoughtful observation rather than protracted and thoughtless labor; and of looking at plants and animals in all their functions, rather than treating any area as a single product system.”

That Which Can Be Sustained Indefinitely

Our vision sees Lily firmly planted in her native soil. Lily and her classmates are a community together and will grow to rely on one another for eventual independence. They will learn to value diversity as they work together sharing resources and yields. Lily’s special education will not be a place she goes but a service provided within her community so that they can learn to support one another organically from the beginning.

We, as Lily’s team, gardeners with different experiences, perspectives and skill-sets will work cooperatively to ensure Lily remains an integral part of her school ecosystem. We will favor strong, deep roots over showy flowers. We will observe Lily as a natural part of her environment, noticing patterns. We will use those as the backbone for her support plan and fill in the details as we go. Our efforts will promote high self-esteem and a sense of belonging for Lily and her entire class. They will play together and have fun.

Looking towards the future we see this community of adults including Lily with a strong sense of who they are and their values individually and collectively. We see Lily living independently and contributing her own unique flowers or fruits to her garden. We dare not predict what that will look like, the budding is all for Lily. We can only tend with great care and a shared vision of her permanence and belonging.

-Mom and Dad

