

## Core Competency Story.

Melissa Galbraith

Over the Christmas holidays in 2012, all the resident but Michele, had families to spend the holidays with. Christina and I volunteered to take Michele (2 days each), with us to our family Christmas's. On Dec. 26th 2012 my sister and I drove to Guelph to pick up Michele. My mom's side of the family was going to be at my mom's house that day; 13 people, not including myself or Michele.

My sister and I wrapped up a bunch of chocolate bars, a bag of chips, stationary and small gifts from around the house, so that come to the time when everyone was opening presents, Michele would have something to open. Michele spoke with everyone in my family throughout that afternoon. Although she needed a few reminders to quiet down, talk appropriately, and give personal space, Michele did a great job and enjoyed herself. This was so beneficial for Michele, as she got a great deal of positive attention, got to spend the holidays with a family(s), and had the chance to socialize and interact with others outside of Monarch. Michele ate dinner with us; well, the Michele variation of Christmas dinner, which consisted of potatoes and mushroom to soup to follow. Michele sat around in the living room and opened presents, and sat at the desk in the evening writing a note, and socializing with random people.

One of Michele's favorite questions to ask, "How many living (grandparents, aunts, uncle, etc) do you have?" That day, Michele got to meet my "living (grandparents, aunts, uncle, etc)".

Michele spent the night at my parents, as well. I wasn't sure how easy it would be to get her calmed down and to sleep that night, as there was a lot of stimulation and activity for her throughout the day. Michele and I chatted for a few minutes when I put her to bed, and she called me back into the bedroom once. After that, she stayed in bed and went to sleep. Michele was in a great mood in the morning, we had breakfast and lunch with my parents and then headed back to Monarch. Michele was chatty in the car, and just in an overall good mood. I could tell that Michele had a good time.

Michele was on her best behaviour that day, it was very encouraging for me so watch her behave so well in a very unknown and new environment. I did not go too far away from Michele's side most of the time; we even slept in the same room that night. Michele was very chatty and got to talk to a lot of people. Michele was very polite and friendly to everyone that she talked to. My family was very good with Michele as well, and took time to listen and talk to her, even if just for a short period of time. It was also really great for me to see my family react in such a positive and helpful way with Michele, whether they understood her or not. The rapport Michele and I have was strengthened over that couple of days. This was such a great experience for Michele and I'm glad that I got to spend that Christmas with Michele.