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During an outreach at Frankie's World Medical daycare in Philadelphia, I was introduced to a Talicia Jones-Clark, a mother of a 3 year old son, with a very complex medical diagnosis. Talicia was new to the city of Philadelphia; she had packed up her life in Florida, along with her mother and 3 year old son, in hopes of receiving better medical treatment at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Talicia at this time had never heard of Parent to Parent of Pennsylvania so Una Reese, Director of Frankie's World pointed her in my direction. Talicia and I spoke in great detail about her son, his conditions and her expectations of Philadelphia. After talking to her about our program, she was convinced that being matched in our program was the emotional support that she needed.

The next day, Talicia and I spoke from the office and I completed her intake. Talicia and I had many things in common, our children were the same age, we both had boys and my son also attended Frankie's World. This match became a personal mission to find Talicia the supported that she needed. I began searching the database and it didn't take long before I realized that Peer Supporter Crystal Dailey would be a perfect match. Crystal was not only a supporter in our database but also a fellow Frankie's World mom, who headed the parent committee at the center.

Upon calling Crystal Dailey she was more than enthusiastic to support as this would be her first time. I gave Crystal, Talicia's information and she agreed to contact her by the end of the day. Wow, I was amazed at her eagerness and desire to "pay it forward". I also gave Talicia a call and informed her that a match had been made and that she could expect to hear from Crystal very soon. Oddly enough, although Crystal and Talicia had crossed paths at Frankie's World, they had never been introduced.

About a week later, I called Talicia to do a follow-up. Talicia immediately went on and on about how helpful Crystal was and that they had talked several times over the last week. Talicia reported that it felt like her and Crystal had been friends for years and that their children were even in the same class. Talicia and Crystal had planned a play date already and were well on the road to building a great friendship.

About a week later, I got an email from Crystal Dailey thanking me for connecting her with Talicia. Crystal was very passionate about supporting and she was so happy to be communicating on a regular basis. I am in touch with Crystal on a regular basis and she never misses an opportunity to catch me up on the latest phone call between her and Talicia. It's ironic how it took Parent to Parent of PA to make such a lasting connection between two people.

On May 5, 2012, I had the pleasure of once again seeing Talicia at Variety's Special Needs Day at Sesame Place. Talicia had her son, her mother and of course right in tow was Peer Supporter, Crystal Dailey. I believe Crystal has taken the kindness of supporter

to a new level. My family and I, Talicia's family and Crystal's family, enjoyed spending the day together at Sesame Place. Our children played and laughed. It was like old friends coming together.

It's one thing to make a match over the phone. However, the beauty of seeing it all come together is more rewarding than I ever could have imagined. This is why I love what I do. The power of the parent voice can never be replaced.

