Save the Date: June 19, 2016
Mark your calendar for the 6th annual Summer Scamper 5k, 10k, and kids’ fun run benefiting our hospital and child health programs at Stanford University School of Medicine. You can help us reach our $500,000 goal by walking, running, volunteering, and fundraising.
For more details, visit SummerScamper.org.
Today, after several years of working with the team at Packard Children’s, Ray is a happy, outgoing fourth grader. He’s a three-time season champion on a local youth bowling league. He participates in Cub Scouts and loves golf, swimming, and video games. He is the bravest 10-year-old I know. At last year’s Summer Scamper, Ray was the Patient Hero for Autism and overcame his fear of loud noises to help present race awards on stage. He is no longer afraid to share how he’s feeling. He is always willing to offer tips to his fellow bowlers, and frequently helps us with computer problems at home.

As parents, Alan and I also utilize the Stanford Autism Center ourselves. Their Mindfulness Program for parents has expanded our network and given us new skills, including techniques to keep calm in stressful situations so that we can focus on keeping Ray calm as well. We have also met other parents facing similar challenges, who offer us support and suggestions to help navigate various situations with Ray.

In the future, we will work with Stanford researchers on studies to help children with autism better understand and interpret the emotions of others, giving Ray and many others even more opportunities.

Thank you for your support of Packard Children’s. To help more children like Ray live full lives and create fun memories, visit supportLPCH.org.

A grateful mom says thank you

The Bravest 10-year-old I Know

By Emily Cantey

Editor’s note: Emily, our guest author, is an inspiration. For the 2015 Summer Scamper, she and her husband practiced for hours with their son, Ray, who has autism, so he’d be ready to hand out race prizes on stage. We asked her to share how our hospital – and donors like you – helped her amazing, beautiful son.

As a 4-year-old, my son, Ray, struggled to make eye contact with people and fixated on playing with rocks outside.

When our doctor told us that Ray had autism, my husband, Alan, and I were uncertain about the future – and also relieved. Now we had an explanation for Ray’s idiosyncrasies.

At the time we were living in Washington and found really limited resources for kids with autism spectrum disorder.

When Ray was 7, we moved back to the Bay Area, and immediately reached out to Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford for occupational and physical therapy for Ray.

His occupational therapists encouraged us to join a pilot social skills group that helped Ray understand emotions – both his own as well as those of others – and taught him self-control. The therapists even took the kids to a park to practice in real-life situations.

It was amazing to watch Ray interact with other children and see them respond to him with normal reactions as opposed to being confused or laughing at him.

Alan and I are always astonished by how helpful the hospital’s staff is. They are an endless source of information on opportunities for kids with autism, including schools, athletic activities, and parent groups and help us navigate the many websites, organizations, and services available to families like ours.