



LEARN FROM US

A short film made by and with nonspeaking autistic people

TRANSCRIPT

[GRANT BLASKO] Hi. I am Grant Blasko, a college-bound high school senior.

[JORDYN ZIMMERMAN] My name is Jordyn Zimmerman. I communicate by typing on an iPad.

[ENDEVER* CORBIN] My name is endever* and I am a multi-modal communicator.

[ISAIAH GREWAL] Hi, I'm Isaiah Grewal from Canada. I type and spell to communicate.

[NARRATOR] We are all autistic and we are unable to rely upon speech to be understood. Most of us are nonspeaking. Some of us can speak a little, or from time to time.

People have a lot to say about us. They write stories and biographies. They produce plays and make movies about us. But they are not listening to us.

[RHEMA RUSSELL] Just because I cannot speak does not mean I don't hear. I hear everything people say to me or about me. I may not show understanding in my face, but I know and understand. Not a word said escapes my so strong ears.

[DAMON KIRSEBOM] To anyone who wishes to represent nonspeaking people, I ask that you communicate with us directly. Misrepresentation of nonspeaking people leaves us more vulnerable to abuse.

[JORDYN ZIMMERMAN] I should not be left out of conversations or presumed incompetent simply because I don't rely on spoken language.

[ENDEVER* CORBIN] There needs to be more representation of diverse autistic identities.

[HARI SRINIVASAN] The media often shapes how we view ourselves and how others around us view and esteem our place in society. When there is lack of representation or improper representation, it directly feeds into the internalization of stigma, where your membership in a group is the very cause of your negative self-esteem, feelings of inferiority and even feelings of self-hatred.

[NARRATOR] If your story says there's no hope, people may not realize how many of us can share solutions about how to support nonspeaking children and adults. People who write about us tell the world what *they* think is best. Other people who follow their example could hurt us rather than help us.

[RHEMA RUSSELL] The way to demean me is to speak to me as if I am a baby.

[PHILIP REYES] I don't like people talking about me like I am not there.



[NARRATOR] How do we get it right? Consult nonspeaking autists from the start and at key points throughout your project. Read our blogs and books. Watch our movies and videos. Learn about our lives.

[HARI SRINIVASAN] If you have a voice, you can use it to help bring dignity back for the members of the more marginalized autistics.

[NARRATOR] Ask us. Listen to us. Nothing about us without us.

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