

Logan Film Festival to Show Film Focused on ABA

Sue Reeves

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JR Cairns

A family who used applied behavior analysis techniques to help their young son with autism is the subject of a film that will be shown at the Logan Film Festival this weekend. The 40-minute documentary, "Be With Me," chronicles the journey of the Cairns family of Phoenix. Their son, JR, turns 21 in December.

"It was very therapeutic for them and enlightening for me," to work on the film, said Michael Terrill, the filmmaker. "We want to bring hope to people who need it."

Terrill met JR's mother, Lori, at a business function and was intrigued immediately by her story. When JR was first diagnosed, Lori said, there were no services available, so the family brought in therapists and ABA specialists to help.

"The family describes it as a perfect storm of therapists and a super-determined family," Terrill said. "All the stars aligned."

The message of the film, Terrill said, is hope.

Because of JR's success, Lori now owns HOPE Group, which now provides ABA services to 700-1,000 families in the Phoenix area. Utah State University alum Bryan

Davey, a board-certified behavior analyst, is her business partner.

The film will be presented at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 27 at the Ellen Eccles Theatre in downtown Logan. For more information, visit www.loganfilmfest.com.