

Living with Epilepsy

Owen Phelps

Owen Phelps is a 12-year-old hockey fanatic from Oxford County. He loves being at the rink, playing mini-sticks, and staying up to date on everything going on in the hockey world. One day, he wants to play in the NHL.

His epilepsy is not going to stop him.

“Owen was nine-years-old when he experienced his first seizure. It was a nocturnal tonic-clonic seizure, so he was asleep when it happened,” explained his mother Sarah.



When Phelps was first diagnosed, he was fearful of his condition. “At first, my worry was that I was going to die,” the young boy confessed. “But, I learned that I was going to be okay.”

These fears were felt by Sarah as well. She has experienced a lot of anxiety about the unknown of when her son’s next seizure would happen, how long it would last, and how severe it would be. This journey has taught her to balance her fear with trust. “I was told early on in this journey that nothing changes for Owen, he still gets to do everything he used to do. So when he asks if he can participate in things and I want to say no out of fear, I remind myself that it’s not fair to him. I can only control what I can.”

realizations.

ESWO played an important role in these

“Owen has attended The YEP! Program and has met with ESWO several times. He really liked YEP!, because it made him realize he wasn’t going to die and that there were others just like him facing the same challenges. It’s a place where he knows he is understood,” said Sarah.

Phelps hopes he will grow out of his condition eventually. But until then, he is doing what it takes to take care of himself and stay healthy. “I always carry water with me now and I make sure to get a good sleep,” he said.

He offered the same wisdom to other individuals living with epilepsy, suggesting that they too take care of themselves by drinking water, getting lots of rest and taking their medicine. “As long as you do that, you will be okay,” said Phelps.

Sarah offered some of her own advice directed at parents. “Reach out and talk to other parents who are also on this journey,” she suggested. “It is not an easy journey for our children or for our families, but having someone who understands you in that time where you feel like your world is falling apart makes all the difference in the world.”

As for her son, Sarah has all the confidence that he will accomplish all of his goals and aspirations, regardless of his condition. “He has big dreams and I want to see him achieve each and every one of them. Epilepsy may sometimes slow him down but he will achieve everything he wants to,” she said confidently.