

My name is Karter!

When I was born I suffered a severe type of brain injury called Hypoxic (loss of oxygen), Ischemic (loss of blood), Encephalopathy (affecting the brain); or HIE. As a result, I have spastic quadriplegic cerebral palsy. This makes my body feel tight in my arms and legs, and doesn't cooperate the way I need or want it to! It also makes it hard for me to use my core muscles.

I also have epilepsy, which means I have seizures everyday. They are typically quick, jerky movements that annoy me and disrupt my routine.

I don't let any of this stop me from learning, growing, and enjoying life!

Vision....

My brain damage affects all of my muscles, including my eyes. You may notice that my eyes drift. I wear glasses primarily to keep my eyes aligned. I have good acuity, but have astigmatism in both eyes. I see best when things are 6'-8' in front of me. I can see all colors, and really enjoy faces. I am able to focus on a picture when there are less visual distractions, so my mom usually puts them on a black background.

I am able to track objects and people in my immediate environment. I can see people from across the room, but may not pay attention to them. To get my attention, it's best to be up close. When I am tired, my head gets tired and I may drift to one side. If you are showing me pictures, be sure to put them on the opposite side so you know I am paying attention!

My Family...

I live in Hugo, MN with my mom (Tiffany), dad (Kole), and crazy sisters (Maddie, older; Gabby, younger). The rest of my extended family lives in Iowa. They visit me as much as they can, though! I also have my CNA, Rachel. She is my "person" during the week and takes great care of me!



Things I Like...

- Reaching with my left hand!
- Baby Einsteins
- Wheel/Monster (toy)
- Books
- Being held upright
- Bouncing

Communication...

Even though I may not use words to communicate, my expressions and actions will let you know how I feel! Please assume I understand what you are saying, even though I may not be able to respond with words.

Since the muscles in my hands and arms won't cooperate, I am not yet able to point or sign. Instead, I am learning to use my eyes to communicate! I use both picture symbols and my eye gaze device. I am learning to look at pictures to make choices. To help me choose, hold real objects, pictures of objects, or have the pictures on my device. Say, "Karter do you want ___? Or ___? Make a choice." Please give me 5 seconds to process what you are saying, think, and use my eyes to indicate what I want. Too much talking is confusing and distracting!

I also am learning symbols for "Yes," "No," "Stop," "Go," "More," and "All Done."

Sometimes when I am tired, my head will drift to one side. When this happens, please present the pictures on the opposite side to ensure I'm paying attention.

Also, please show me my "all done" symbol when we are done with an activity so I know it's over. Likewise, show me a picture of the next activity or person so I know what's next!

Things I Don't Like...

- People touching my head
- Being held like a baby
- Too much talking!
- Eating or swallowing
- Unexpected noises or touches
- Being flat on my back
- Too much wind or sun

Seizure Triggers...

My seizures are considered "startle seizures," which means sensations of discomfort, certain noises, or textures can surprise me. Sometimes feeling water can do this at first, but I quickly recover! They usually only last 3-10 seconds. Sometimes they come in clusters.

When they happen, try to comfort and interrupt them by patting my chest or spinning my wheel.

