

## Team work and advocacy get Nicholas on the Team!

Nicholas Moore, a student at [Alpharetta High School](#), loves running. Despite having autism, Nicholas is on his school's cross-country team and the highpoint of his athletic year is the annual cross country race.

This month, Rita Young, director of [AADD \(All about Developmental Disabilities\)](#) received a disturbing e-mail from Nicholas' school counselor informing her that, according to the requirements set by the Georgia High School Athletic Association, Nicholas lacked one credit for entry in the race. According to their policy, he would also not be allowed to practice with his team.



The counselor had met with the coach and assistant principal, but had not been able to find a way to help Nicholas get the required credit.

Rita was not prepared to simply accept the ruling. She sent e-mails and roped in the assistance of Scott Crawford, a job coach and provider for people with disabilities, who worked with Nicholas during the summer on passing his learner's test

Rita and Scott then met with the assistant principal, Mr. Hershel Bennet. Together they worked on a plan to help Nicholas achieve his dream. They gathered letters of support from the school, friends and family, and the school submitted a hardship application to the GHSA for Nicholas. In the meanwhile, Rita was working on a back-up plan to call in more assistance if the application was denied.

Finally, a communication arrived from the GHSA. Nicholas' application had been approved! He was 'good to go' on all cross country activities!

Rita says, "I have come to the conclusion that advocacy is best done when you have a team alongside".