

# Autism Service Dog Delivered to Assist 5-year-old Boy in Saskatoon, Canada

*Today 5-year-old Erik from Saskatoon, Canada, received a very special delivery of his very own Autism Service Dog from Service Dogs by SDWR.*

SASKATOON, SASKATOON, CANADA, February 4, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Erik, a 5-year old boy living in Saskatoon, Canada, has received a very special delivery today of his very own [Autism Service Dog](#) from Service Dogs by [SDWR](#) to assist him and help better communicate his needs. Based in Madison, Virginia, SDWR has a mission to provide specially-bred and trained dogs for people with invisible disabilities like Diabetes, PTSD, Seizure Disorders, or in the case of Erik - Autism Spectrum Disorder. SDWR has hundreds of service dogs working across the United States and around the globe. SDWR is currently serving approximately 1,000 families.

Chad, a black labrador retriever Autism Service Dog, recently graduated from SDWR's [Service Dog Raiser Program](#) where volunteers diligently raise young service dogs in training over the course of approximately one year. Both the dogs and raisers must complete the foundation and skill set training provided through SDWR trainers at their facility in Virginia.



Chad, Autism Service Dog from SDWR

Chad is also an honored graduate of the SDWR Fallen Officer Puppy Program. The Fallen Officer Puppy Program, also known as "FOPP," is an initiative by SDWR to pay respect to the legacy of service by fallen American police who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. Chad is named in honor of fallen hero Detective Chad William Parque of North Las Vegas Police Department in Nevada who succumbed to injuries sustained from when his department vehicle was struck head-on by another vehicle in 2017. Chad's work as an Autism Service Dog with Erik will carry on in memoriam of Detective Parque's life of service before self.

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Erik is high functioning, which means he is able to appear to function very well. However, he has communication delays, social difficulties, and behavioral issues.”

*Erin, mother of Autism Service Dog recipient*

Erik was diagnosed with Autism at the age of 4-years-old. Erik's disability affects him in his family in many ways. Erik's

mother, Erin, states that, “Erik is high functioning, which means he is able to appear to function very well. However, he has communication delays, social difficulties, and behavioral issues. Loud noises and lights can be upsetting to him, as can situations with too many people.” Erik

experienced normal development until failing the 18 month speech screen. In January 2015 he was hospitalized multiple times for Idiopathic Ketotic Acidosis, where his blood sugars would drop into dangerous levels quickly. Erik has sleep issues and wakes frequently throughout the night. Erik's Autism causes us to have extra safety concerns, as well as causing him struggles in his daily life. Erik's family is hopeful that a service dog will act as a guardian for him and help keep him safe and comfort him.

Chad will assist in reducing the effects each diagnosis has on the family's independence and daily life by working continuously with Erik. Since Chad is a service dog and covered under laws in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, he will be able to accompany Erik and his family everywhere - from school, to piano lessons and music therapy, and even on vacations.

SDWR's unique training program is what sets them apart from other non-profit service dog organizations. SDWR trainers will continue to return for training sessions with Erik, his family, and Chad every 3-4 months over the course of the next 18 months to continue working on Chad's customized training, follow up training and training the human to make a successful team and public access certification.

SDWR is a nonprofit organization based in Madison, Virginia, and relies on donations to help the organization in its mission, "Until there's a cure...there's a dog." To make or donation or learn more about SDWR, please visit the website, <https://www.sdwr.org>. To learn more about Autism Service Dogs go to <https://www.sdwr.org/service-dogs/autism/>. To find out how you can volunteer as a puppy raiser visit <https://www.sdwr.org/volunteer-opportunities/>.

Beau Warren  
Service Dogs by Warren Retrievers  
+1 540-543-2307

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Service Dogs by SDWR is based in Madison, Virginia

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