

# 8-year-old with CP improves gait, gains and strengthens muscles



## Casey Gonnella

**Diagnosis:** Cerebral Palsy/Spastic Diplegia

**Training Products:** Galileo Basic

**Training Since:** January 2014



### The Background

Casey Gonnella was born at 26 weeks gestation, and at 16 months old was diagnosed with a form of cerebral palsy known as spastic diplegia. A late walker, Casey struggled with high muscle tone in his legs, walked on his tip toes and had a labored "scissor" gait.

Casey's mom, Jennifer Gonnella, said his left leg is more affected by the CP than his right but both legs have very high tone. He rounds his shoulders and swings his upper body when he walks, all traits associated with CP.

### The Training

Casey trains on the Galileo twice a day, seven days a week, typically in five, three-minute sessions. He also uses the Galileo weekly with pediatric physical therapist Dr. Susan Hastings who monitors his progress, checks his body position and incorporates new exercises. Time on the Galileo replaces nearly three hours a day of neuromuscular electrical stimulation (estim), now occasionally used in targeted areas.

"Casey is amenable to Galileo training because it's easy to do and is much more convenient. We no longer fight over doing his home-therapy program. While using the Galileo, Casey goes through a series of exercises including toe raises, squats, pushups, balancing on one leg – and even handstands," Jennifer describes. "He loves it. He hops on and it's like a game to him because it takes such a short amount of time compared to what he used to do."

Plus, Casey is in control of his training. He starts his training with the push of a button on a remote. "It is really remarkable," Jennifer says. "I'm just there to chat with him and make sure he stays in perfect alignment while going through the different exercises."

### The Gains

After nine months of use, Casey has been able to reduce his physical therapy sessions to once a week.



He continues improving his heel-to-toe walking gait, balance and range of motion. "Over time, Galileo has helped Casey strengthen his muscles, gain more energy and recently, while on vacation, comfortably walk in sand and go body surfing - which were firsts," Jennifer says. "Daily tasks like getting dressed are also made easier due to improved flexibility in his legs and better balance."

She also has some advice for parents. "What I tell any parent is if there is even a 1 percent chance it will increase your child's quality of life it's worth it. Our Galileo experience has been nothing but positive, and while I know not every child will achieve the same results as Casey, I firmly believe that it is worth trying."

*"It's been an absolute miracle for us. There are so many benefits and no downside. I can't help but encourage parents to try it with their kids."*

Jennifer Gonnella  
Casey's mother



(831) 222-0330  
GalileoUSA.com