

Creative Works

Normal

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Abstract: This poem reflects on various conversations from a parent's perspective when someone uses the word "normal" to describe a child who has a disability.

Keywords: Disability; Normal

“She looks normal”, you say.
She is normal.
She is my baby girl.
What is normal?
Are any of us normal?

“She looks great”, you say.
“I didn’t think she would be born like that.”
What do you mean? Like that...
Nobody is born in a wheelchair.

“She looks cute with her walker.”
“I would like one of those for myself”, you say
For what? I wonder.
Do you need help to walk too?

“Look at how fast she runs.”
“She doesn’t look like she has a disability”, you say.
How does a disability look? I wonder.
Will she always be questioned?

Will she always have to prove she is disabled?
Does she have to show you her scar? I wonder.
Do you need to see her catheters?
Do you need to see her bowel program?

She has no shame.
She was raised to be proud.
She is determined.
She is fierce.
She is disabled.

Lindsay Heller lives in Volcano, HI with her husband and three children. She holds a Bachelor of Biotechnology degree from the Rochester Institute of Technology and recently earned an Interdisciplinary Certificate in Disability & Diversity Studies from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa.



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