

# **SILENT STRENGTH**

**The Triumphs and  
Challenges of a  
D/HH Athlete**

**Alexis Jones**

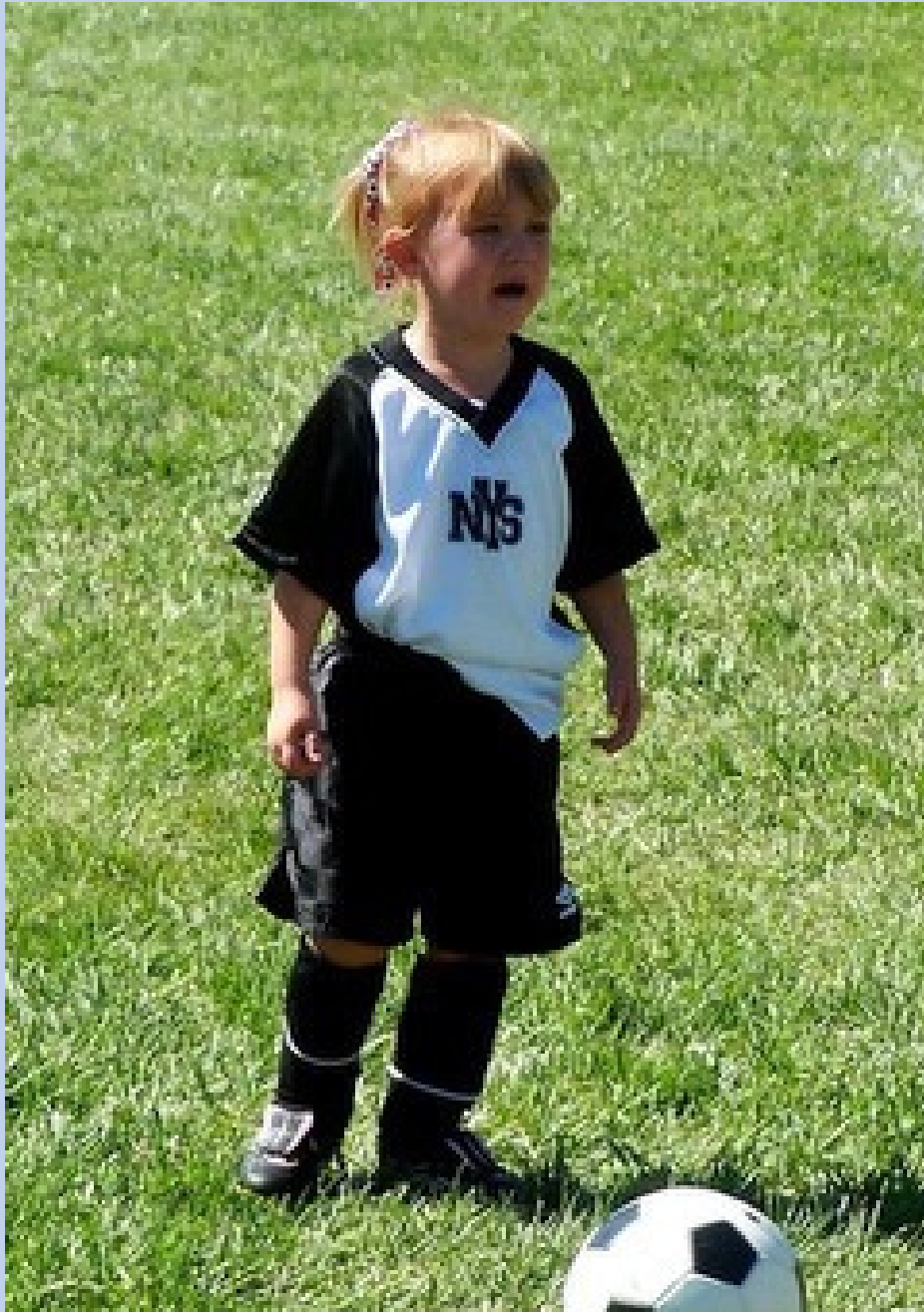


# Early Childhood Diagnosis

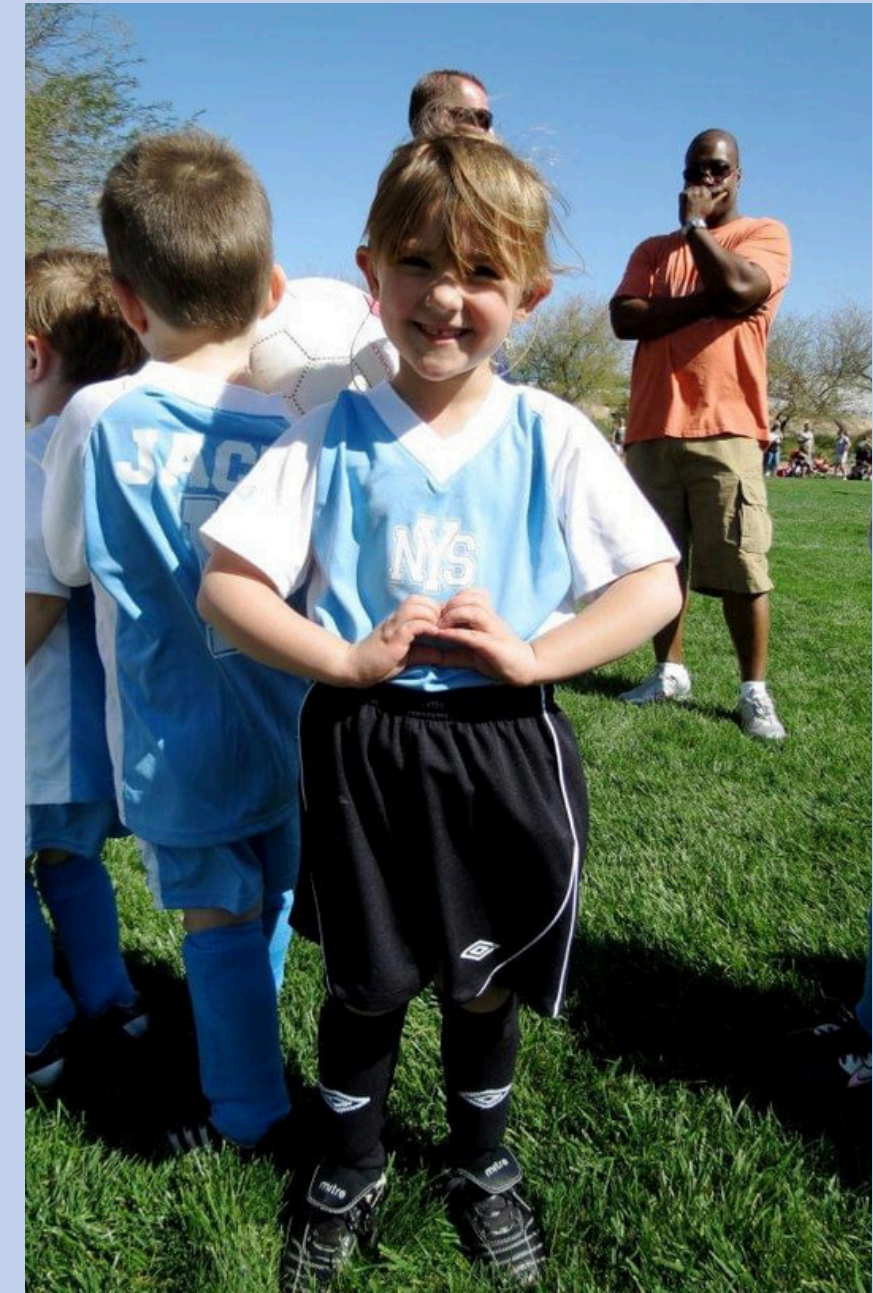


- Did not pass newborn hearing screening
- After months of tests, ENT insisted hearing was “normal”
- Years of further interventions; after my younger brother was born and did not pass his test, I got further testing done
- ENT misread the initial report and I was properly diagnosed at 4 years old

# Discovering My Love of Soccer



- Soccer became my passion from the moment I first kicked a ball
- Faced challenges and barriers with coaches and teammates
- During each stage of my journey, I had to learn to triumph



# Overcoming Barriers on the Field

- Having to use different strategies to communicate with coaches and teammates
- Learning the importance of teamwork and how understanding and patience from others helped overcome communication challenges
- Adapting to situations where traditional communication methods weren't possible such as during games when it's too loud or fast-paced



# Finding Success On (and Off) the Field



**My love for soccer outweighed the obstacles of being deaf, driving me to adapt and overcome challenges on and off the field.**

**Being a D/HH Athlete has taught me**

- **Resilience**
- **Problem Solving**
- **Power of Perserverance**

# Timeline of Participation in US Deaf Womens National Team



**2018**

*4th Grade:* Discovered the US Women's National Deaf Soccer Team during research for a Passion Project on Deaf Athletes; had my dad fill out the interest form



**2021**

*July:* Attended training camp in Salt Lake City, Utah; was introduced to the world of Deaf soccer for the first time



**2023**

*January:* Attended training camp in Lakewood Ranch, Florida

*May:* Represented USDWNT at Adapt and Thrive Camp in Santa Ana, California

*July:* Attended training camp in Champaign, Illinois; named as alternate for the 2023 World Cup Team



# Challenges That Still Exist:

Addressing the ongoing difficulties

**The need for more understanding and inclusion in sports teams and leagues.**

**Limited awareness and understanding from others, leading to misconceptions about abilities and creating the need for constant self-advocacy.**

**Limited access to resources for D/HH athletes (lack of interpreters, specialized training)**

# Tips For Advocating for Yourself



**01**

**Be clear and assertive about your communication preferences**

**02**

**Educate others when necessary**

**03**

**Seek and utilize available resources**

# Inspiring the Next Generation of D/HH Athletes



**Seek out role models to help navigate the world of sports with confidence**

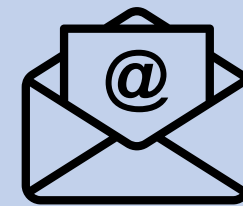
**Encouragement to embrace unique qualities and use them as strengths on the field**

**Modeling importance of building a support system: friends, coaches, and teammates who understand and uplift**

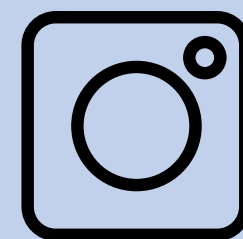
**Reflect on personal challenges and use as opportunities for growth**

# **Thank you!**

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