

# Itzel Gonzalez

"Children that learn together, learn to live together"

As a mother of a child with a disability, I feel it is important to get children involved in activities and give them exposure to things that interest them regardless of their abilities.

My daughter, Itzel Gonzalez is a 9-year-old girl in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade that loves school, music, and dance. Since the age of 3, Itzel has been fully included in regular classes. She reads, writes, adds, subtracts and began multiplication this year. Itzel's favorite subject is reading. For the 2008-2009 school year, Itzel received a medal from the district for outstanding advance performance in Language Arts in the CAPA state test.

At six years old, I enrolled Itzel in a dance studio where she attended a ballet and tap class with her "typical" peers. Itzel has participated for the last 2 years in the studio's Annual Recital. This year she began a new class, hip-hop and looks forward to her annual performance in June.



In addition to dancing and cheering, Itzel has performed in the Hesperia Days Parade, Victorville Christmas Parade, Mavericks Stadium and at the Annual Cheer Exhibition at Cal State San Bernardino.

In addition to dancing and cheering, Itzel has played baseball with the High Desert Challenger League and Soccer with the AYSO VIP League.

This has given Itzel an opportunity to develop strong friendships in school and out in the community. She is growing up with a positive self-image in spite of her disability. As her mother, I have always been dedicated toward helping my daughter live as normal a life as possible.