

Maria McTernan

My name is Maria McTernan and my husband, Gerry, and I live in Needham, Massachusetts, just west of Boston. We have three children—John, Julie, and Lori. Lori, who is 18, was diagnosed with Rett syndrome shortly before her 2nd birthday and before a marker was known. Lori is a beautiful young woman, inside and out. She loves to be with family and friends. Her giggles and laughs are contagious; her eye contact is better; and she continues to teach us so many things. Lori loves to swim, go for long walks, and loves anything to do with music. Rett continues to present limitations and challenges, but Lori works harder than anyone we know. She is the first to notice the vibrant colors of spring flowers or a gentle breeze and reminds us of the beauty of simple things.

Through Lori, we have met so many wonderful teachers, therapists, physicians, and other families. Our ability to handle Rett syndrome and all of its challenges has in large part been due to this support that has been extended to us. For that, we will always be grateful.

A member and officer of Rett Syndrome Association of Massachusetts for 15 years, I have been actively involved in fund raising, creating public awareness, and advocating for better services. I have testified before legislators in Massachusetts for increased funding, participated in parent panels, and helped parents find and obtain needed services.

I am currently the Director of Development for The Charles River Center, a non-profit organization in Needham that provides programs for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I am responsible for all fund raising, public relations, and marketing activities.

Like all parents, I hope and dream for a day soon when Rett no longer exists. I am excited to be a new member of FAB and look forward to accelerating the goals of IRSF and making that day a reality.

I can be reached at mtmcternan@gmail.com.