

[Hastings boy gets help for the little things](#)

Katrina Styx - 03/23/2012



At the age of 8, David Rondeau of Hastings had a stroke. He was in the hospital, in the middle of a temporal lobe resection when blood flow to his brain got pinched momentarily. To Rondeau's mother, Angie Duffy, who now lives in Cottage Grove, the stroke was an unfortunate byproduct, but not her main concern. Rondeau had been suffering from multiple severe epileptic seizures on a daily basis prior to the surgery. It's been about five years, and Rondeau, 14 now, has been seizure free ever since. But the stroke left him with a paralyzed left arm and foot drop, the inability to raise the front of the foot due to weakness or paralysis. Rondeau has been going through physical therapy to keep movement in his left shoulder, but he always seemed to find a way to get out of it, Duffy said. And as he gets older, the family has begun to wonder how he'll manage without parents looking after him all the time. While watching one of KSTP's news programs, Duffy's mother saw a story on a device called Lend-A-Hand that is designed to help reclaim the use of a disabled hand. Lend-A-Hand attaches to the forearm or leg and has an open-ended casing that "grips" items. About six months later, Duffy's mother mentioned the device. Three months ago, Rondeau got his first Lend-A-Hand. Rondeau is just happy that he can go fishing now, he said, but Duffy is excited for the opportunities her son will have now that he can use his disabled arm. He can help out with household chores and help prepare food. He's taking a family and consumer science (FACS) course in school this spring, and she said she's excited to see how he manages there. They're all skills that he'll need as he gets older and learns to take care of himself, and keeping his arm active will help him learn more. "The more he uses it, the more he'll figure out what he can do," Duffy said. Michael Duncan, the creator of Lend-A-Hand, is sure Rondeau will be able to do whatever he wants now that he has a way to use his arm again. "He's got the heart, he's got the desire," Duncan said. It's amazing, Duncan said, how the loss of one simple function such as being able to use your hand can have such a huge effect on a

person's life. "They want to do things again," he said. He said he's worked with all sorts of people who have lost mobility, from stroke survivors like Rondeau to injured military veterans to people with less severe injuries or weakness who just want something to take the strain off their wrists. The device has another physical benefit. While those who use it get more independence from being able to perform basic functions again, physically engaging a disabled limb works to improve strength and endurance. Rondeau, for example, doesn't have use of his hand, but can still move his shoulder. Putting that ability to use will see him develop muscle. Currently, his left shoulder is visibly smaller than his right simply from lack of use. Lend-A-Hand is made by Even Par Enterprises, which is based in Red Wing. Duncan is the CEO and president of the company. More about Lend-A-Hand can be found online at www.evenparenterprises.com.