

## JULIE'S STORY

**"This story is about our now 17 year-old, fantastic, fabulous, Bridie!"** ✨

Like a lot of mums nowadays, I had some prenatal testing when I was pregnant with Bridie. Nothing out of the ordinary was picked up and my pregnancy continued on as normal. Working in the medical field, I had lots of sneaky ultrasounds along the way and I found out we were expecting a little girl.

I went into labour early so we quickly got ourselves to the hospital expecting a C Section as she was in a difficult breech position. Our new little girl was in a hurry, delivered feet first at 1am before we even made it to surgery. After Bridie was born, I was very unaware that there was an issue. She was perfect in all of our eyes, still is. The nurses suspected something though and our precious newborn underwent genetic testing.

Bridie was seven days old when we were abruptly told that our daughter had Trisomy 21. After this very poorly delivered news, my husband and I took a moment to gather ourselves in the car park. Fortunately, I had already been put in contact with a social worker due to the traumatic nature of Bridie's birth. She helped us understand the situation better and gave us a red folder. She said, "When you are ready this will be of great help to you." The folder contained lots of information that we referred to for many years. Most importantly, it contained a phone number for Down Syndrome NSW. It also provided early intervention options, general information about Down syndrome and how to claim for Centrelink assistance, the NDIS wasn't launched at this stage.

It took us a few months to make contact with Down Syndrome NSW, I guess I needed time to get my head around the situation. Once I did reach out, I found care and support on the other end of the phone whenever I needed it.



“Bridie is a young adult now and of course we've had our up and downs as you do with any child, but throughout the journey I knew that Down syndrome NSW was there to encourage us and help make connections with other families in a similar situation. I'm so grateful for that little red folder, it opened up a whole new community of support and the chance to make some lifelong friendships.”



Earlier this year, I happily accepted a role with Down Syndrome NSW as a member of the support team. I'm able to offer my learning and understanding to parents who are exactly where I was 17 years ago. Although no longer a red folder, our New Baby Welcome packs that I now get to pass onto families, are filled with the same love and unwavering offer of support when it is most needed. " - Julie

