Anne and Andrew's Story

Andrew was born in 1987 and I was told, by a very sympathetic doctor, that he would probably never be able to feed himself and that it was unlikely he would ever walk.
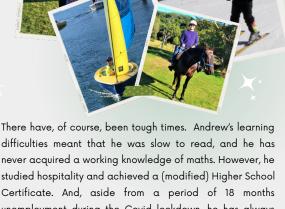
Let me introduce you to my action man!

Andrew is a keen swimmer, skies at intermediate level, rides horses, competes in charity fun runs, and sails solo around Middle Harbour.

He also enjoys travel and regularly holidays with Careaway, an organisation which provides supervised tours for adults with mild to moderate intellectual disability. His recent trips have been to the United States, New Zealand and Japan.

And trust me when I tell you he can feed himself! Andrew is a competent cook – I love his crispy skin ocean trout with wilted spinach and spicy risoni. His other specialty is lasagne.

There have, of course, been tough times. Andrew's learning difficulties meant that he was slow to read, and he has never acquired a working knowledge of maths. However, he studied hospitality and achieved a (modified) Higher School Certificate. And, aside from a period of 18 months unemployment during the Covid lockdown, he has always had meaningful work. He is currently employed by a financial services company in the city and travels independently from our home in Turramurra.

Looking back on the joys and challenges of parenthood over 35 years, I am cognisant of important changes which have transformed the lives of people with Down Syndrome notably, that there is now strong support from organisations such as the Down Syndrome Association; that the medical profession has greatly improved its knowledge and attitude; that NDIS has been established; that there are more employment opportunities; and that the general public is more aware and accepting of people with special needs. There is no doubt, however, that the most difficult challenge for parents, and the greatest impediment to our children's success, is dealing with intransigent bureaucrats at the Department of Education and Centrelink. The latter has been the bane of my life!

Anne Case
30 January 2023

Contact details : ✉ prenatal@dsansw.org.au 📞 02 9841 4444