



The Perfect Gift Australia: Celebrating new beginnings

The Perfect Gift and Down Syndrome Victoria

A special partnership has developed between **The Perfect Gift Australia** and **Down Syndrome Victoria**. Together, they share a vision that provides **support, community, and celebration** for families welcoming a child with Down syndrome.

In 2019, Cathy Gibb, a Maternal Child Health Nurse, approached Down Syndrome Victoria with an idea to create a partnership. This collaboration aims to ensure that every family welcoming a child with Down syndrome receives a **beautifully curated gift box**, symbolising a warm welcome and heartfelt congratulations. Since its inception, over **100 'Perfect Gift' hampers** have been delivered to families across Victoria.

What's inside a Perfect Gift?

The items included in **The Perfect Gift** are mostly handmade by dedicated volunteers from **Hume Retirement Village** (Albury, New South Wales), and contributions from other generous volunteers across Victoria and New South Wales. These volunteers are united by a common goal: to transform the experience of receiving a Down syndrome diagnosis to one of joy and celebration.

Gift box contents:

- Handmade baby clothes and toys
- Quilts, baby blankets and embroidered towels
- Personalised congratulatory messages
- Resources and information about Down syndrome
- Encouraging words and a new parent pack from Down Syndrome Victoria

Changing perceptions

In Australia, the current birth rate for Down syndrome is (estimated) **1:1100** births and in Victoria we welcome approximately **40-50 babies** each year. The Perfect Gift initiative aims to challenge outdated stereotypes and misconceptions by reaching out to new families with a positive message: **'Congratulations, you did an amazing job! Your child is perfect. We're here for you.'**

Delivery and support

The gift boxes are shipped to Down Syndrome Victoria, where their Family Support Manager organises to have the box along with Down Syndrome Victoria's new parent pack delivered to new families.



About Down Syndrome Victoria

Down Syndrome Victoria provides **support, encouragement, information**, and resources to families who have a member with Down syndrome. Down Syndrome Victoria is committed to working alongside people with Down syndrome and families to reach their potential and live the life they choose.

Key services:

- Comprehensive prenatal and family support
- Information and resources tailored to individual needs
- Community engagement and advocacy across the lifespan
- And much more!

Join us in supporting people with Down syndrome

The Perfect Gift Australia and **Down Syndrome Victoria** are committed to ensuring that every child born with Down syndrome is celebrated and supported from the very beginning. Together, we are creating a community where all people with Down syndrome are valued and enjoy social and economic inclusion.

Contact us

Down Syndrome Victoria's Family Support Manager Sonia Bonadio is available for home and hospital visits, as well as support over the phone or email.

For more information please contact us on 03 9486 9600 or email familysupport@dsav.asn.au.

Visit www.downsyndrome.org.au/vic or www.facebook.com/perfectgiftaustralia for more details.

'We just wanted to send you a heartfelt thank you for the beautiful and thoughtful gift to welcome our little Ella to the world. We feel so lucky that Ella has connected us to such an amazing community. Thank you for all that you do.'

Sandra, Pat and big brother Harrison

Acknowledgement

The Perfect Gift was first established in Ireland by Sinéad Fidgeon in 2015. The Perfect Gift recognises that families who have babies born with a disability, including Down syndrome, may not always be provided with the appropriate and necessary emotional support and community connection they need.

'I cried opening our Perfect Gift. It was hand delivered by Sonia during our first meeting with her which was an added special touch. Receiving this gift box gave us comfort and reassurance that we had so much love and support out there. Every time I see something from our box it reminds me that we will be ok. THANK YOU! We may not know you, but we love you so much!'

Vittoria Sita