

# LIBBY'S STORY

It was the beginning of 2015 and Libby was excited about starting pre-school and making new friends.

Tragically, within a matter of days, her world was shattered. Doctors discovered four brain tumours and diagnosed Libby with Neurofibromatosis type 2.

Libby was immediately flown to Sydney for surgery on the tumour behind her eye.

Instead of having fun at pre-school, Libby was in hospital - a world away from her old life. She missed her dad and baby sister Kaitlyn terribly.

Thankfully during that time, the family had the Starlight Express Room which gave them a break from the reality of Libby's illness and treatment.

Back home in Darwin, Libby slowly started at pre-school but couldn't always join in with the other kids. Her mum Jen said it was heartbreaking to see her bubbly little girl withdraw and suffer so much pain.

"Libby had a metal plate in her head, so was really restricted for those first few months when she came from hospital."

Libby had ongoing tests and three-monthly trips to specialists in Sydney. Tragically, MRI tests showed another tumour at the base of Libby's brain.

The illness, treatment and the exhausting travel took its toll, so the family relocated to Sydney where Libby endured further surgeries and long stays in hospital.



Libby and Luna share a strong bond

Amid all that pain, Libby received the exciting news that she had been granted her Starlight Wish.

The anticipation and planning of her Wish gave her something fun and positive to focus on.

Libby decided on a puppy - a black Flat Coated Retriever. Jen said it was love at first sight and she named her puppy Luna-Moon!

"We brought Luna home a week before Libby's spinal surgery and they formed a strong bond. This helped Libby in hospital as she worked hard to get home to her puppy," Jen said.

Luna keeps Libby company when she has to miss school and the girls love playing with her every afternoon.

For now, Libby's condition is stable, but the future is filled with uncertainty. Libby will need ongoing brain and spinal tests to monitor her condition.

**“We don't know what the coming months may hold, but for now Libby is getting through each day with a smile and the joy and friendship of her best friend Luna by her side. You don't think you'll ever need Starlight until the day you do. The difference they make is amazing. Thank you so much.”** –Jen, Libby's mum



Libby's Starlight Wish was for her puppy Luna

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