

NEVAEH'S STORY

Nevaeh's mum Jemima is not at all surprised her daughter wants to be a paediatric nurse when she grows up. "She's down to earth, very caring and always tries to help others," she said.

Sadly, two year ago on New Year's Day, Nevaeh's life was turned upside down.

Nevaeh woke up and was unable to move her right leg. When hours later it still hadn't improved, her worried mum and dad took her to their local hospital. An MRI revealed a tumour on Nevaeh's spinal cord and she was immediately flown by air ambulance to Sydney Children's Hospital.

It was so sudden; the family were in shock. Jemima said: "One minute Nevaeh was a healthy, happy nine-year-old and the next minute she's in surgery for five and half hours having a tumour removed."

Her neurosurgeon removed most of the tumour but there was still a significant amount fused to her spinal cord and Nevaeh was confined to Intensive Care. Sadly, there was more tragedy to come. Nevaeh was diagnosed with a high-grade Glioma (Grade 3 Astrocytoma) and began radiation and chemotherapy straight away.

The family live nearly 400km north of the specialist hospital so were faced with the agonising decision to relocate to Sydney.

"One of the hardest decisions we made was pulling Nevaeh's younger siblings out of daycare and school, so we could all be together during Nevaeh's treatment," Jemima's Dad, Shay said.

Nevaeh during treatment



Nevaeh wished for a family holiday on a cruise ship

There was nothing more important than being together, so the Starlight Express Room became the family's haven during long hospital stays.

Jemima said: "It meant so much to us to have a place to get away together and feel like we weren't in hospital."

Thanks to Starlight supporters, there was more fun and happiness on the horizon when Nevaeh was granted her Starlight Wish for a dream family holiday cruise on the Barrier Reef.

After the incredibly tough few years they've had, the wish meant the world to the whole family.

“We've never been on a big holiday before and we don't get to spend a lot of time as a family so to get us together for a whole week is great.”

—Jemima, Nevaeh's mum

In the lead up to her wish, Nevaeh was excitedly researching the Great Barrier Reef and the local marine life she'd get to meet snorkelling!

Nevaeh's Starlight Wish was an unforgettable adventure and took the family to a world away from hospital and treatment. Jemima is so grateful for the generosity of Starlight supporters. "Thank you for Nevaeh's Starlight Wish. It really means a lot to us."

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30
years*