

# Caleb Turpie

LIVED EXPERIENCE: Paediatric, Cancer Care, Neurology



*In 2015 when Caleb was only 9 years old, he was diagnosed with a fast-growing Medulloblastoma (brain cancer) and was immediately transported to Sydney where he underwent brain surgery three days later, followed by chemotherapy and radiotherapy. Without this surgery he was only given two weeks to live. After this surgery, Caleb was unable to move the right side of his body or his face, and completely lost his ability to smile. With extensive physiotherapy and rehabilitation, Caleb relearned how to stand and walk again. In 2018, Caleb underwent a six hour surgery to restore his smile - a piece of muscle from his leg was taken with microsurgery then used to attach a nerve within the muscle to another nerve in Caleb's cheek – one ordinarily responsible for chewing and clenching. The surgeon then joined artery to artery and vein to vein with sutures finer than hair, magnified eight times under a microscope. This pioneering surgery and admission has paved the way for other people as young as 11 to be treated at Lifehouse in Sydney. Caleb has firsthand experience of what it is like to use a wheelchair for mobility, feeding tube for nutrition and a central line for vascular access. Since facing his mortality at such a young age, Caleb has a passion to share his story to improve the treatment for other young people facing sudden and extreme diagnoses' and assist in creating a better path to adjust to life post-treatment.*

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND EXPERIENCE:

- Co-presented at Camp Quality
- Chapter written in 'You're So Lucky' by Grace Wethor (author)
- Featured in Senate Enquiry regarding rare diseases (mother participated with Caleb's input)
- Various speeches to promote not-for-profits and encourage charitable donations
- Featured in Media across Australia
- Part of an art exhibition at Sydney Children's Hospital
- Currently promoting Chris O'Brien Lifehouse 'Go The Distance in August' campaign

## KEY INFORMATION

Place of Birth: Port Macquarie, NSW, Australia  
 Current location: Port Macquarie, NSW, Australia  
 Age: 15 years old  
 Language/s: English only  
 LGBTQIA+: No  
 NDIS Participant: Yes  
 Diagnoses: Medulloblastoma (brain cancer, diagnosed at 9 years old)  
 Healthcare Access: Primary Health Care, Allied Health, Mental Health, Secondary and Tertiary care

## LINKS

- [How a Sydney surgeon saved Caleb's smile - University of Sydney](#)
- [Caleb - Camp Quality Feature](#)
- [Caleb Scott in remission after stage four brain tumour - Port Macquarie News](#)
- [The fight for Caleb's smile - Chris O'Brien Lifehouse](#)
- [Caleb Feature Giggle Ball Camp Quality - Issue 167 of Greater Port Macquarie Focus](#)