

Georgie during treatment

MEDIA RELEASE
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Help Starlight give the gift of joy to seriously ill children this Christmas

This Christmas, Starlight Children's Foundation is calling on people across Australia to help bring joy into the lives of seriously ill children in hospital.

Starlight is calling on the community to raise $1.4 million by Christmas Day to help bring much needed joy to seriously ill children in hospital and grant 186 life-changing Starlight Wishes.

Every dollar raised will help seriously ill children and their families access Starlight's vital hospital programs and grant Starlight Wishes, creating lasting memories and bringing happiness to them when they need it most.

After childhood cancer turned four-year-old Georgie and her family's world upside down, her Starlight Wish for a golden retriever puppy gave them something positive to look forward to.

"Georgie got to know a therapy dog during her treatment and loved patting him and taking him for little walks. So, for her Starlight Wish, we knew a puppy would bring her so much joy," said Georgie's mum, Courtney.

For Georgie and her family, Sadie was so much more than a puppy. After everything they'd experienced, anticipating her arrival gave them the opportunity to heal together as a family. Today, she continues to bring happiness, comfort and connection to their everyday lives. "Sadie represents the new future we have rather than what we just went through," Courtney said.

A Starlight Wish gives seriously ill children the chance to dream big and experience something created just for them. It provides something fun to look forward to, time together away from the stress and worry of hospital, and happy memories the whole family can remember long after the Wish has taken place.

Starlight CEO, Louise Baxter said Christmas is an important opportunity for people across Australia to help bring happiness back into the lives of children experiencing serious illness.

"When a child is seriously ill, so much of the joy and freedom of childhood can be replaced by hospital visits, treatment and uncertainty. A Starlight Wish gives a child and their family something positive to focus on and a chance to reconnect and simply enjoy being together again," she said.

"We all know that happy childhood memories stay with us for life. This Christmas, we need the community to help create those special memories for seriously ill children and their families."

Starlight acknowledges and pays respect to the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work, live and play.

As part of the 2026 Christmas Appeal, Starlight is also inviting the community to share the childhood memories that still bring them joy - from a much-loved pet or family holiday to Christmas traditions and simple moments spent together and be inspired to bring that same joy to seriously ill children in hospital.

Every donation to Starlight's Christmas Appeal will help make more Starlight Wishes possible and give seriously ill children and their families something joyful to look forward to.

Visit starlight.org.au to donate and bring joy to a seriously ill child this Christmas.

Starlight thanks our Christmas Appeal fundraising partners – ANZ, JBL, LEGO and William Sonoma Inc.

ENDS

Interviews and B roll footage available
For more information, please contact Kyla-Rose | kyla@goodpr.com.au | 0406 104 185

About Starlight Children's Foundation:
Starlight Children's Foundation brightens the lives of seriously ill and hospitalised children and young people by replacing pain, fear and stress with fun, joy and laughter. Since 1988, Starlight has grown to become Australia's broadest-reaching children's charity and is consistently recognised as one of Australia's most reputable charities. In 2025, Starlight created 926,887 experiences that transformed the healthcare experience and provided much needed social connection and a sense of belonging for seriously ill children and their families. We also provided 4.5 million online entertainment experiences, and through the Healthier Futures Initiative, Captain Starlight reached 118 remote communities across Australia. Starlight also granted 424 life-changing wishes in 2025. www.starlight.org.au