



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## Give the wonder of a Starlight Wish this Christmas

With the festive season fast approaching, [Starlight Children's Foundation](https://www.starlight.org.au) (Starlight) is calling on Australians to help raise \$1 million to grant 153 children's life-changing Starlight Wishes this Christmas.

When a sick child's world is filled with hospital and treatment, a Starlight Wish is an incredible gift of happiness. Creating a lasting impact on the whole family, Wishes lift a seriously ill child's spirit and give families a much-needed break from treatment to make memories together.

Ariana was six years old when she was diagnosed with severe Aplastic Anemia (bone marrow failure), which is a life-threatening condition. Ariana endured exhausting rounds of chemotherapy, over 100 blood transfusions and received a lifesaving bone marrow transplant from her younger brother. Due to her extreme vulnerability from treatment, Ariana spent almost an entire year in isolation, unable to have contact with her siblings or other kids on her ward.

When Ariana learned that she was being granted a Starlight Wish and travelling to the Gold Coast to take on the thrill of the theme parks as a VIP, it meant that the whole family was able to reconnect and form incredible lifelong memories after ongoing separation.

For Ariana's Dad Michael, the highlight of the Wish was having fun all together as a family, "We spent a lot of time apart, so it was really special to us that the Wish was some time that we could spend together, and try and rebuild and reconnect as a family," he said.

"The Starlight Wish was a very important step in starting to heal as a family and we'll be forever grateful for that."

Life-changing Starlight Wishes are as unique as the child who chooses them, they come in all shapes and sizes and help increase sick kids' wellbeing, happiness, and optimism for the future.

With travel having been restricted the last few years, holidays are a prime Wish choice for sick kids in 2023, allowing families to build incredible memories together across Australia. Wishes including bedroom makeovers, gaming consoles, cubby houses, playrooms and of course, furry friends are also popular. In a first for Starlight, a Highland cow will become the newest addition to the family of a Starlight child living in regional Australia.

CEO of Starlight, Louise Baxter, said: "A Starlight Wish is an important source of hope and positivity for sick kids and their families who are going through an incredibly difficult time."

"It's not just the Wish itself which is so significant. It gives children something to look forward to, provides much needed connection and family time and it gives them wonderful memories."



"During this special time of year the happiness of children is paramount. That's why Starlight is asking for urgent support, to grant 153 seriously ill children like Ariana, their Starlight Wishes this Christmas."

Since 1988, Starlight has granted over 13,000 life-changing Starlight Wishes to sick kids.

The wonder of a Starlight Wish starts with you this Christmas, visit [starlight.org.au/Christmas](https://starlight.org.au/Christmas) to donate before December 24.

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**For more information, please contact:**

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**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 its establishment in 1988, Starlight has expanded to become the broadest reaching children's charity in Australia and was awarded the number one most reputable children's charity in Reptrak's 2022 Charity Reputation Index. Starlight was also recently endorsed as a 2023 Great Place to Work. There is a Starlight Express Room in every children's hospital across Australia and over 140 Captain Starlight's nationwide, who made 186 trips to remote communities in 2022. Starlight created over 1,303, 775 positive Starlight experiences for children, teenagers and their families in 2022. Last year, Starlight granted 507 wishes and this year, Starlight granted its 13,000th Starlight Wish. [www.starlight.org.au](https://www.starlight.org.au)

