

Damien's Story

HOME AND LIVING

Damien Pugh, a vibrant 52-year-old residing in San Souci, has been on an incredible journey of self-discovery and empowerment since moving into his new Supported Disability Accommodation (SDA).

The vision for Damien is a good life, he is empowered to live with minimum support. Once leaving his group home in October 2020 Damien has been able to reimagine his life. Damien now has a home that he loves, he likes catching the lift to his apartment, he likes engaging with neighbours and visiting the local cafe and shops.

He has choice on who are his Supporters Workers by using Hire-Up where he can have access to Support Workers who are interested in working with him and are from the local area and meet his selection criteria. Damien has a great team of young, energetic and likeminded Supporters Workers who are trained in empower Damien to do things for himself via a "CANdo" framework that supports Damien organise himself to get up and shower, making breakfast, cleaning up and making his bed.

Gone are the days of restrictive practices. Damien's front door remained unlocked during the day, granting him the freedom to come and go as he pleased. This newfound sense of security and autonomy brought a sense of joy and liberation to Damien's life.

One of Damien's greatest joys was cooking meals alongside his Support Worker or Sister. With a flair for culinary creativity, Damien took charge of the kitchen, whipping up delectable dishes like Salmon Poke Bowl, San Choi Bow, and Pasta Bolognese. Cooking became more than just a chore; it became a source of connection and joy, creating cherished memories shared with loved ones.



Simple pleasures like grocery shopping took on new significance for Damien. Armed with his shopping list, Damien ventured to the supermarket across the road, relishing the opportunity to tick off each item independently. In his previous living situation, such ordinary tasks were often out of reach, making each trip to the store a celebration of newfound freedom and independence.





But Damien's journey wasn't just about finding a new home; it was about crafting a life filled with purpose and fulfillment. Damien's family, and stakeholders worked closely to create a comprehensive project plan and timeline, ensuring a smooth transition to his new apartment. From visiting local amenities to overnight stays prior to moving, every step was meticulously planned to support Damien's needs and preferences.

Through life mapping exercises and consultations with industry experts, Damien charted a course towards a brighter future, exploring innovative housing options and leveraging the support available through NDIS. With a strong support network in place, including family, friends, and allied health professionals, Damien embarked on this journey with confidence and determination.

Today, Damien's story stands as a testament to his biggest supporter and advocate, his sister Mary, who has always been by his side and has reached out to Down Syndrome NSW for support throughout Damien's life. Together they have empowered Damien and other individuals like him to live life on their own terms, with dignity, respect, and independence.

