



## HARRY'S STORY A 30 WEEK MIRACLE

As written by mum, Toni

**Andy and I were so happy when we found out we were pregnant. We had found out on his birthday at the start of February 2010. Our due date was given to us as the 17th October.**

The pregnancy continued fairly uneventfully. I had some pelvic pain but apart from that I was going along quite well. We got all the way to week 27. I had been feeling not very well and booked an appointment with my midwife. I had told her all my symptoms and she seemed concerned straight away. After some blood tests and other things it was confirmed I had preeclampsia. I was admitted to hospital and my blood pressure was increasing. We started to find out all the information about preeclampsia and it was not good. I spent two weeks in hospital trying to stay stable but unfortunately I was not able to hold on much beyond 30 weeks.

**Our son Harry was born at 30 weeks and 5 days he was 1.2 kgs at birth and just 37 cm long.**

He was taken straight to the Christchurch Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and ventilated as he was unable to breathe. It was a scary time that unfortunately my husband had to deal with alone as I was very sick and in ICU.

Harry was looked after by the amazing nurses in NICU. Harry's time in the neonatal unit was full of ups and downs, worries and joys and gave us lots of unique memories. As first time parents we had already felt out of our depth, but this experience was beyond anything we had anticipated.

*...this meant I watched him a lot and was waiting to know what it felt like to feel like a real parent.*

I was finally discharged after five days and started my new normal routine of going to the hospital everyday to sit, talk and read to Harry. We could only hold Harry once a day as any more than that was too difficult for him outside of his incubator. This meant I watched him a lot and was waiting to know what it felt like to feel like a real parent.

2 weeks after Harry was born the September 4th earthquake hit. We had just finished renovating our house and the damage was considerable but we were so happy Harry was safe at the hospital.

*This was the first time we felt like proper parents as we could properly touch him and dress him.*

A few days after the earthquake Harry's incubator was placed on the lowest temperature and he had grown to 1.8 kg. It meant he could go into a cot! This was the first time we felt like proper parents as we could properly touch him and dress him.

At 35 weeks gestation Harry hit even more milestones, he had his first ever breastfeed and finally was over 2 kgs. This was so exciting as it meant we could finally bath him! It was so special and memorable even though it was in the NICU and not at home where he belonged.

After 63 days in hospital we were able to take Harry home. The enormity of this was not lost on us as we had just spent all that time in hospital and Harry had had been surrounded by nurses and doctors. He was going to be at home with just us! It was so nerve wracking.

**Harry grew from a tiny, red, sick, sleeping baby to a plump crying baby we were able to take home.**

All the time we were there we were looked after by the brilliant nurses and The Neonatal Trust. They helped us navigate the difficult time we were having, deal with the grief of the unexpected experience and then continue to support us when we were home.

Andy has run 2 marathons in support of The Neonatal Trust and Baby Sensory has supported the Trust since our start in 2016. Please continue to help us by collecting sponsorship money and donations for the raffle prizes.

## Why we share neonatal journeys

Neonatal journeys can be full of stress and anxiety. Due to this, providing hope and encouragement to parents on a neonatal journey is key and we therefore look to share personal stories of people who have been there before you.

We receive so much positive feedback from families in a neonatal unit who read these stories and feel strength, hope and positivity knowing that they are not alone going through these experiences and feeling certain emotions.

*Thanks for sharing Toni and Andy.*

### Harry's journey, key numbers



**30 WEEKS**

*that's 10 weeks early*



**1.2 KILOGRAMS**

*at birth*



**35 WEEKS GESTATION**

*to reach over 2kgs*



**5 WEEKS**

*before first bath*



**63 DAYS**

*spent in NICU*

### The Neonatal Trust is privileged to have the support of Baby Sensory

#### Baby Sensory – Precious Early Learning for Babies

Dr Lin Day (PhD, M.Phil, PGCE, BSc, Dip Ed), is one of the UK's leading parenting experts and a renowned author within the field of childcare and education. With over 35 years of practical experience working with parents and children and driven by the passion and commitment to offer the best possible service, Dr Lin Day developed Baby Sensory, Toddler Sense and Baby Foundations to provide the support and knowledge necessary to lead baby learning and development forwards in the most important first years of life (and ran classes herself for 9 years).

**Baby Sensory™**  
Precious Early Learning for Babies

Baby Sensory programmes are based on research, so it's fantastic that they are able to support future neonatal research through their Superhero Senseathon event

- The 2019 Superhero Senseathon fundraiser raised \$8,362.90 to support the work of The Neonatal Trust
- There are 11 Baby Sensory franchises currently in New Zealand, across both the North and South Islands
- 1,100 babies per week attend a Baby Sensory session across the country

To learn more, head to [www.babysensory.co.nz](http://www.babysensory.co.nz)

#### ABOUT BABY SENSORY CLASSES

The remarkable ability of the brain to make connections and to absorb information has provided Baby Sensory with a wonderful opportunity to encourage the learning and development of babies from birth. Their classes give parents the chance to spend quality time with their babies, to interact warmly with them on a one-to-one level and to enjoy a wealth of rich sensory experiences.

All activities are accompanied by valuable developmental information. This is important because parents need to know why and how they can lead their baby's learning and development forwards in the most important year of their lives.

To learn more, head to [www.babysensory.co.nz](http://www.babysensory.co.nz)