

Elida's Story – York Division - November 2021



Elida was born 13 weeks premature and was diagnosed with a host of medical challenges ranging from spina bifida to airway abnormalities requiring a tracheostomy. She spent her first 10 months of life in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Penn State Hershey Medical Center.

Because of her tracheostomy she was taught to be very cautious around water – always protecting her airway. Water slides, pool parties, beach trips, and even showers were a risk. In 2017, after 12 years, her lungs and airway were stable enough to remove the tracheostomy. She was SO excited to finally be allowed to swim and “go under the water.”



However, we quickly realized that years of being cautious and timid around water led to a genuine fear of swimming. She was often left looking AT the water instead of playing IN it.



A friend recommended that we try swim classes through Easterseals. After some research we decided to try the 1:1 instructor led swim classes at the Carlisle YMCA. Upon entering the pool, we met the instructor, Susan, who greeted us with enthusiasm and a warm smile. Susan worked diligently with Elida, teaching the mechanics of swimming along with water safety.

In a handful of sessions Elida has blossomed from being anxious and clingy to delighted and eager for her time in the pool.

We are so very thankful to have taken part in the swimming services provided by Easterseals and incredibly grateful to Susan for her time, expertise, and dedication.

