

## Brayden's Story

“On this day February 10th 2009 I had a life changing experience, I was burnt. My story is that when I was five I had just arrived home from school and decided to cook unattended on a element and as I went to turn off the element my top was hanging low and it caught on fire. As I was only young at the time I wasn't quite aware about fire safety so all I did was run outside screaming but luckily for me my next door neighbor was outside who was able to run and rip off my top for me, then he called out for my mum who was inside at the time. She rushed outside and ran me into a cold shower and then rung 111 to get an ambulance. When it arrived I was immediately rushed down to Dunedin hospital where I was put in a induced coma for about three weeks. I spent one night in Dunedin then I was flown up to middle more hospital where I spent the next three weeks in intensive care and endless amounts of surgery's and then spent the next two months in the burns unit. Within this time in Auckland, in the beginning I wasn't quite aware of what had actually happened to me and the severity of what actually happened. When I was first fully conscious all I saw and all I could here were machines all around me. It was a hard process trying to get my head around everything when I woke up. Throughout my time in Auckland i got to adventure around the hospital a little bit and got to meet some new people.

After spending my time in Auckland I was then sent down to Christchurch's children ward where I spent the next month or so receiving treatment and more surgery's to help me. Being in Christchurch I was a lot more aware of what had happened to me but I was still happy and living life one step at a time. After spending all my time away from home I finally got sent back home to Dunedin where I spent a lot more time in hospital. After spending more time in hospital I was finally allowed to go back home which was the greatest feeling ever but unfortunately I was still sent in and out of hospital for more operations and dressing changes. Throughout my time back at home I was sent back to Christchurch once or twice for some more complicated surgery's that they weren't able to preform in Dunedin at the time due to my surgeon not being there at the time.

Eventually I was free I was able to go back to school after six months away, I was able to see all my friends again and do everything again, life was back on track. Of course I still had to have the occasional surgery but otherwise I was free. When I was first burnt I always thought that I was the only one who was ever burnt until about a year later where I was offered to go to an amazing camp where I got to meet others like me. Not everyone was to my extent of burns but they were all in the exact same boat as me. After getting to meet everyone there I had more of an opened mind to being burnt. That camp had helped me out so much in becoming more confident with my burns and being more confident with who I am out in the world.

But over all my biggest help in my recovery process has been my friends and family. They have been by my side the entire way of this journey and without them I don't know what I would have done. Also my last thanks goes to my surgeon who has been there since basically day one. People often ask me “If u could go back and change being burnt would you?” and in my honest opinion I would rather not and the reason is because I have been able to do some many awesome things in my life but the best part of being burnt is getting to meet so many new people. Everyone I have ever meet, they have only been the nicest people ever and have been super supportive of me. Over all my life has been a rollercoaster of event's but over all it has been the best rollercoaster ride ever. And once again I just want to give my biggest thanks to everyone who has supported me through this adventure.”

*-Written by Brayden, aged 15*





























