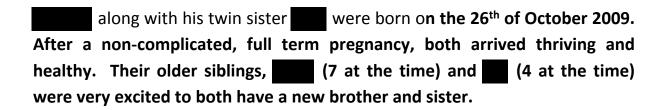
STORY



Both reached their 12 month milestones at very similar times and continued to thrive. As we were heading to 18 month mark, there were subtle things we began to notice with regards to communication, though most of it we put down to personality. He was much quieter than his twin sister and a bit more reserved, and we were determined not to compare them. In all honesty, at the twins 2 yearly check with the health nurse, my concerns were still there but I didn't voice them.

at this point, did not have a huge vocabulary, and although I felt he engaged with his immediate family members, when it came to larger family gatherings he seemed to withdraw and found them overwhelming. If we were at our home during these times he would remove himself to a quieter area of the house, or on another occasion at his aunties house that didn't have anywhere else to go, he stayed in his dad's arms the whole time and clearly didn't enjoy it. In fact we ended up leaving early.

Not long after this, I started researching language delay and also looked at the autism spectrum which was terrifying, so we made the decision to take to our GP for his opinion (was around 2.5 years old). Our GP then referred on to a paediatrician (Dr Anne O'Neil) and also for a hearing test.

This time was a very stressful time, anticipating the outcome of these appointments and hoping that our little boy was going to be okay.

Thankfully, during our appointment with Dr O'Neil, she was very clear in her opinion that was not on the autism spectrum, and with a pass in his hearing test, she suggested we have him assessed by a speech pathologist. She gave us the contact details for the Frankston Hospital Speech Pathology Department, and also advised that there was a lengthy waiting list.

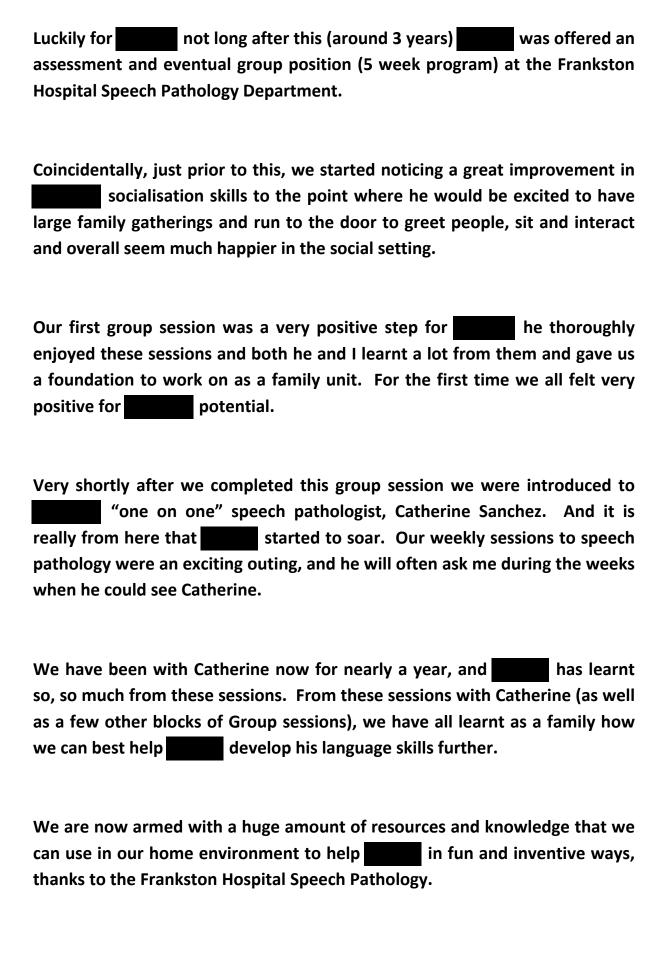
We immediately contacted the Frankston Hospital Speech Pathology Department to get on the waiting list.

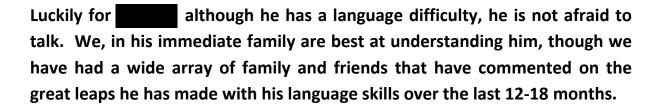
In the meantime and on further discussions with our GP he suggested a private speech pathologist in order to get things underway for and so we attended with a local speech pathologist and her assessment of was that he had:

- Severe articulation difficulties
- Significant expressive language delay

We continued with the speech pathologist on a weekly basis for a number of months, but we eventually discontinued for a few reasons. Her program didn't really seem to be benefitting and they didn't seem to connect well and he didn't like going there. There was also quite a large financial burden for private therapy which didn't seem to be right for him.

We also joined a play group in order to further socialise and although he initially found it daunting, after a few months he very much enjoyed attending.





still has a long way to go, but with the help of Catherine and the staff at Frankston Hospital, we feel he has the best chance to reaching his full potential.

has now just commenced kindergarten which has been a very exciting time. Although we have only just finished our first week, he seems to have settled in quite well, with no separation anxiety and has quite happily waved me off. He apparently does look to whilst at kinder, but that is not of a huge concern.

We look forward to our continued support from the Frankston Hospital Speech Pathology Department. It is very hard to quantify in words the benefits they have provided (and us as parents). I would not like not think where he would be without speech therapy, but we are very grateful for the ongoing support we have from both Catherine and the whole team.