

Sophie's DDH Story:

My pregnancy and birth of my daughter, Abbey, were both perfectly healthy and normal. Abbey experienced an uncomplicated birth; she was a first born, girl with a larger birth weight of 8 pound 9. I had a mild case of hip dysplasia when I was born so we were on the lookout for it with Abbey.

My midwife and paediatrician diagnosed Abbey with DDH, at birth. She was braced on day two. Abbey wore the Pavlik harness from 0-3 months old, the Correctio harness from 4-5 months old, the Edinburgh from 5-8 months old and the Rhino from 8-14 months old. Bracing was 24/7 for the first month, 23/7 until 12 months old and for nights/naps until 14 months old.



We also discovered Abbey has Hypermobile joints and is very (very) flexible with clicks all over; wrists, shoulders, elbows etc. She has very low muscle tone as well. We have done Physio with her weekly from age 14 months- 24 months. She is now 24 months and has only just started standing up and trying to push a toy or walk along the edge of the coffee table. Her balance and muscle strength are coming along slowly but surely. Abbey wears a special supportive pair of Pedro boots to support her unstable ankles.

Day one of the DDH diagnosis I was actually really ok with it all. I had a great



perspective at the time. We struggled to conceive naturally, so I was so pleased to have my baby girl no matter what. It all happened so fast and bracing on day 2 meant I didn't really know any different and neither did Abbey.



I have found it was easier not to be close to my mother's group, as their kids were all doing everything at the right age- rolling, sitting up, crawling, walking. It was easier not to be around kids the same age and have mums comparing them.

I am amazed everyday by Abbey. The simplest things mean so much to me. Today my girl crawled over to me and stood up and reached her arms up for me to pick her up for the first time. This is just an example of something so simple but meant so much finally at age 2.

My tip is to trust your mothering instinct and seek whatever help you think your child needs. You are their only voice for now. Love them and enjoy them. Perspective helps. I was fortunate to always remember that hip dysplasia was not life threatening for Abbey. As hard as many moments can be, seeing her physically frustrated and delayed, I know that we will get through each day and make it as good as we can.

Written June 2015.