

# Acacia, my daughter

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It's hard to believe my journey began nine years ago when my beautiful daughter Acacia was born. My world was changed forever on the day she was born, not only because she was my first born and I had to adjust to life as a new mom, but I found out by surprise that she was born with Down syndrome. Later that day we found out that she had a rather large hole in her heart that went through both the atrium and the ventricle. The doctors told us that she needed open heart surgery sometime between the ages of 3 – 6 months. When she was 6 months old we got that call that she had a surgery date. At 6 months she had open heart surgery, and at 9 months due to a complication with the heart surgery, she had a pacemaker implanted. She has had over 5 other surgeries to put tubes in her ears and one surgery to put a tube in her eye. Despite these challenges, Acacia has done remarkably well and she continues to amaze us every day. She had had over 200 signs when she was 2 years old and now she is very verbal and she can communicate to us very well. It's even better now since she got a hearing aid a couple of months ago.



Everyone who works with Acacia tells me what a wonderful, positive little girl she is. She has a great sense of humor and she brings joy to everyone who knows her. She loves all animals, working on puzzles and art work, and she really enjoys reading. Another accomplishment that we are so proud of! Acacia has taught me so much in her life so far. She's

taught me that it's not about what you do, but it's about what can be done through you. She's taught me that accomplishments are all relative and that's not what makes you happy. Look past all the junk, live in the moment, and accept people for who they are. Bringing a smile to someone's face is more important than scoring a goal, or getting a good grade.

~ Patti