Brooklyn

**BROOKLYN IS JUST LIKE ANY OTHER 11-YEAR-OLD GIRL YOU MIGHT KNOW.**

She loves to play with her friends, socialize on Facebook Messenger, play on her iPad and at times, torment her younger brother and sister. She loves Disney Descendants, DC superhero girls, dance, and making movies with her friends. She can often be found in her room fixated on the latest YouTube videos or playing with her massive collection of LOL dolls. She was also born with a rare neurologic disorder called episodic ataxia that drastically affects her fine motor, gross motor and speech abilities. Brooklyn may not be able to walk or talk like the average 11 year old girl but she has the same hopes, dreams and desires as any other child her age.

Lansdowne Children’s center has been an integral part of her development since a very young age when she was first enrolled with physiotherapy. Occupational therapy, speech therapy and the early integration program soon followed, along with the recreation program as she approached the appropriate age. When Brooke first became involved with Lansdowne Children’s Centre we were simply following Doctor’s orders. It soon became clear to us that this was a group of people who would help to shape who she will grow to become. The staff are committed to ensuring a safe, inclusive environment for all. They have been an excellent resource to us as the parents of a special needs child and we can safely say that Brooke would not be the well-adjusted, social child that she is today if it were not for their help.

When we first signed up for the recreation program, we did not know that it would become a regular social highlight, the most anticipated summer camp, and clearly the most beneficial thing we could do to help our daughter improve her social well-being. Brooklyn has been a regular participant in the Recreation Programs now for more than 5 years. She has participated in the swim nights, bowling, various theme nights, and dance class. By far, her favorite has been the Kidtastic playground nights. One thing is for sure; by the end of each of her programs, she is completely worn out physically but always comes home with a huge smile on her face having spent an evening with people who treat her not as someone different, but like who she is...a little girl who loves to play just like any other.