

# Davey Jean



“Valley Children’s is in our backyard, and we both grew up here. We love this hospital!”

-Brittany, Davey Jean’s mom

Davey Jean was born with a rare genetic disorder called 22q11.2 deletion syndrome (22q). 22q happens to about 1 in 4,000 people. Those with 22q are at risk for up to 200 different known anomalies including, but not limited to, congenital heart defects, cleft palates, learning disabilities, developmental and speech delays, parathyroid malfunctions, craniofacial abnormalities and mental health disorders.

In Davey Jean’s case, she was faced with many of these 22q-related issues. At 30 weeks in utero, she was diagnosed with Tetralogy of Fallot, a compilation of four heart defects, and required open-heart surgery soon after her birth. Her parents entrusted her to the Willson Heart Center at Valley Children’s, which serves more than 9,000 families and children each year with advanced technology and state-of-the-art therapeutics for both congenital and acquired pediatric cardiovascular diseases.

Heart issues were not the only hurdle Davey Jean endured. By the time she was 3 years old, she was still non-verbal and used American Sign Language to communicate. Her parents learned that she had conductive hearing loss and would need ear surgery to help drain the fluid causing her hearing loss. Davey Jean also went through two complex surgeries for her Atypical Submucosal Cleft Palate,

which made it nearly impossible for her to form sounds and words. The ENT department at Valley Children’s, along with the plastic surgery, audiology and speech therapy teams, all joined in an effort to help with Davey Jean’s hearing issues and speech delays. Their care has helped her become more verbal.

Now 9 years old, Davey Jean has already undergone five surgeries at Valley Children’s. She continues to see Valley Children’s specialists in cardiology, plastic surgery, genetics, neurology, endocrinology, GI, neuropsychology and developmental pediatrics, as well as physical and occupational therapy.

True to form with most 22q children, Davey Jean has a big personality that comes in a tiny package. She is very active and enjoys playing with her friends, doing gymnastics and going to the park. She loves her family and adores her dog, Tater Tot. She is currently thriving in a private school that focuses on children with learning disorders, specifically Davey Jean’s dyslexia.

Davey Jean’s mom, Brittany, was also treated at Valley Children’s as a child, and feels an extension of family with the hospital. “Valley Children’s is in our backyard, and we both grew up here. We love this hospital!”

*Futures Worth Fighting For.*

[valleychildrens.org/foundation](http://valleychildrens.org/foundation)