

Hello, my name is Brandi Trancynger. I am 22 years old and I have a beautiful son with Down Syndrome. Eighteen short months ago Noah, my son, was born on, April 20, 2010. I also have an 8 year old brother with Down Syndrome, his name is Isaiah. Interesting huh?? Eh, a little. I want to tell my story to all the other families who have had a lovely little angelic blessing such as mine.

To start out I want to tell you about my brother, Isaiah. Since Isaiah was the beginning to our new and approved life of wonderful blessings. Isaiah is my youngest brother. It is because of him I have grown to love all children with disabilities. Isaiah was born August 6, 2003. The day he was born was the day we found out he had Down Syndrome. We had no clue there was even a possibility to anything like this. The thought never crossed my family's mind that this beautiful little boy was going to have Down Syndrome. My mother had complications in her pregnancy but because she was older nothing was really a huge red flag to us. Isaiah was born via C-section. We didn't know until the doctor came in afterwards and said, "I am sorry but we need to discuss something, your son has Down Syndrome." Our hearts were crushed. As his older sister I sat there and watched my family cry and thought to myself, "How could this be?" My baby brother was born with Down Syndrome. I felt horrible. The nurses brought Isaiah in and let my mother, Marcy, hold him for the first time. He was so adorable! We immediately fell in love with him. It was like an instant feeling of love. A few days went by and we were trying to grasp the thought of this beautifully made creation, but I was confused. I didn't understand why God would do such a thing to our family. My heart ached. I hurt for my family and I hurt for Isaiah. A couple days before we left the hospital a nurse came to us and said "God only gives special people a blessing like you have just received." She told us that God won't give us more than we can handle and he has obviously chosen us to care for this special boy. For the past 8 years this has stuck in my head like a needle constantly poking and telling me this over and over again. Almost like I am being reassured. As the years go by I watch Isaiah learn and grow and I accept him the way he is. God made Isaiah special and for a certain reason. He has definitely taught me to love and accept people the way they are and to not judge people so much. I still have my days where I think "What if he were normal?" But that is being selfish, and I love Isaiah the way he is.

Noah was the second beautiful blessing. Noah is my son and he is my angel. Throughout my pregnancy with Noah I had many complications. I also had other major things going on in my life as well, such as going through a divorce with his father. This put a strain on my pregnancy as well as many other things. Up to my 13th week pregnant I was perfectly fine. Noah was healthy as far as we knew and nothing was out of the ordinary. On my 13th week doctor visit I was asked if I wanted to take the optional AFP test. This tests for many different birth defects. Being that Isaiah had Down Syndrome I really wanted this test done. It was important to me and was no option, I HAD to do it. It took weeks to get the results back. The duration of these weeks felt like years. I was so overwhelmed and nervous. I prayed to God that I would have a normal healthy baby. I kept thinking, there was no way I could deal with a child with Down Syndrome. I was thinking selfishly again. I thought I could never raise a child like this by myself. I got a call

from the nurse and she told me the news. She said the AFP test came back positive for Down Syndrome. Immediately I felt my heart shatter. . .I was so hurt and lost. I lost track of what else the nurse was saying and I just wanted to hang up and cry. A few minutes later I heard the nurse saying, "hello are you there, Brandi?" I asked her question after question. She said most people have a 1 in 1000 or higher chance and my chances were 1 in 100. She told me everything would be ok and if I wanted to get an amniocentesis I could, that was an option to be 100% sure. I told her I would have to think about it. Weeks went by, I decided I wasn't going to take any risks of possibly losing my baby so I turned the amnio down. For the rest of my pregnancy, I had multiple ultrasounds to make sure he was growing ok. He was. My family and I went to see a Genetics doctor at UAB as well. At 30 weeks pregnant I was diagnosed being in pre-term labor and put on modified bed rest at home. Meaning, I had to quit my job. I was happy but then again I was upset knowing about the difficulties I was going to have to face raising a baby on my own, possibly with Down Syndrome and not being able to work and save up money.

My water broke at 2am on April 20th, 2010. He was born at 2:34 pm via emergency C-section. WHY? Well, I had overdosed on Pitocin, so my contractions were every 2 min. going off the charts, and my epidural counteracted with this. I was also not dilated more than 3 cm the whole time. I will not exaggerate this but they almost lost us. Our heart rates dropped severely low and I was rushed to surgery and he was delivered in less than 3 min. Before I ever went into labor I always went back and forth on this whole thing about Noah having Down Syndrome. Some days I was ok with it and some days I knew he was going to be "normal". By the time I went into labor I told myself the same thing that nurse told us when Isaiah was born. If it happens, then it happens. I will love him regardless. Once I was barely able to regain consciousness again I was asking to see my baby. I asked my mother more than once if he had Down Syndrome. She answered and said yes he does. A quick second went by and I felt a sudden heartbreak and sadness worse than I had felt in a long time. I just wanted him to be ok. A couple hours later they asked me if I was ready to see him. I was as ready as I could have ever been. The nurse handed me a 5 lb. 6oz baby boy. I took one look at him before she handed him to me, and I thought, "That is not my baby!" I didn't want him to look like this. I did not want him to have Down Syndrome. I was sad. Then I wrapped my arms around him and said "Hi I am your mommy!" I am not lying when I say this but he tried as hard as he could to open those little dark blue eyes and he smiled at me. I was in love! This little darling thing was mine. Yes, he had Down Syndrome but I didn't care. As soon as I saw that little smile I couldn't help but to fall in love. It truly was a blessing. He is a blessing. From this day forward I am happy he has Down Syndrome. He has filled my life with so much happiness and love that I could of ever imagined. He is my little angel and my rock. Every time he smiles I can't help but to feel all warm and happy inside.

Noah was born with no major defects and he was healthy. I was 38 weeks pregnant exactly and he was just on time to me. I wouldn't have wanted it any other way. It is what makes us so closely bonded. We found out when he was 8 months old that he has Unilateral Profound

Hearing Loss in his left ear. Meaning, he is deaf in his left ear. He also has Nystagmus (a small sideways shaking of the eye). Noah is just as normal as any other person. He just has special needs. I am truly thankful that he was born healthy though. God gave me as much as I could handle and honestly I think I am doing pretty good with him. He excels and learns something new every day.

If I had to give any new families any advice it would be to love your child as much as you can. Seek God. And always, always push! Push for their rights and for their health. No one else will do it but you. Push them to excel in their milestones and don't ever stop.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story!

