

MEDIA RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

25 March 2019

WHAT: Purple Day for epilepsy
WHERE: Worldwide
WHEN: Monday 26 March 2018
WHY: To raise awareness and spread information about one of the world's most common serious brain disorders – epilepsy. Go [HERE](#) for more information



Pictured: Nickayla and Larissa
Winter with Wally Lewis

A Mother Going to Great Heights for Her Daughter

Every year on 26 March, the world comes together to celebrate Purple Day, which raises awareness for epilepsy and is a powerful step toward unmasking the myths and misconceptions associated with the disorder, which has a profound effect on so many lives.

This March, Epilepsy Queensland is highlighting our local Purple Heroes to raise awareness and vital funds to assist Queenslanders living with epilepsy. Brisbane has its own Purple Heroes, Larissa and Nickayla.

Larissa is mother to 12 year old, Nickayla. Nickayla had her first seizure when she was just one year old and was diagnosed with epilepsy a year later. Since her daughter's diagnosis, Larissa has frequently accessed Epilepsy Queensland services to support her and Nickayla's journey.

"Epilepsy Queensland provides me with so much support, and there has been many times when I have called up in tears not knowing what to do. Having someone to talk you through it and explain what to do is vital for parents with a child living with epilepsy. Epilepsy Queensland also went out to Nickayla's school to train the teachers on how to handle her seizures. It has made the world of difference to our lives."

This year on Purple Day, Larissa is embracing Epilepsy Queensland's 'I can' theme by climbing the Story Bridge for Nickayla, despite the fact that she is terrified of heights. "I am petrified!" said Larissa, "This was something that Nickayla really wanted to do, but couldn't because of her seizures, so I am doing this to show my daughter, and others who struggle with epilepsy, that I can face my fears and so can you."

When asked what Purple Day means to her, Larissa said that "It is so important to have a day that raises awareness to what epilepsy is." She went on to say that when Nickayla was younger, she

would not be invited to birthday parties as the children's parents were afraid that their children could "catch" this disease. "There is just not enough education around the fact that someone with epilepsy is not a risk to anyone around them, which leads to them feeling alone."

Today, Nickayla is full of life and embraces everything head on. With the help of Epilepsy Queensland, she has been able to meet her hero, Wally Lewis who has been instrumental in showing her that she can do whatever she sets her mind to.

If you would like to learn more about Epilepsy Queensland, how to get involved in Purple Day or make a tax-deductible donation to help fund vital support services for children and adults living with epilepsy, please visit the website at www.epilepsyqueensland.com.au

MEDIA: If you would like further information or are interested in setting up an interview or photo opportunity, please contact Epilepsy Queensland's Communications Manager, Karen Furnivall on 07 3435 5000 / 0402 578 954 / kfurnivall@epilepsyqueensland.com.au. Photos can also be made available.

[Epilepsy Queensland Inc.](http://www.epilepsyqueensland.com.au) was founded in 1969 and provides vital services and support to the 100,000 Queenslanders diagnosed with epilepsy. Through counselling services, guided workshops, and community advocacy Epilepsy Queensland is the only Queensland based epilepsy organisation dedicated to improving the quality of life of people with epilepsy, their carers and families.