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When Carmel Zammit reflects on the challenges she and son Brayden Gill have faced in his 17 years, it brings tears to her eyes.

But today, a smiling Brayden is finding his confidence and in his mother's words is finding his "voice".

Brayden was born with a mild form of cerebral palsy, and diagnosed with autism as a child.

His family experienced ongoing challenges trying to find the right support to manage his behaviour and help navigate his teenage years.

In 2016, that support arrived when Brayden was able to join the NDIS.

"When I had my first meeting with the NDIS I was very transparent, I actually broke down and I just said 'I need help'," Carmel said.

"I needed a bit of a break, I'm a single mum, I haven't got any support, I was really struggling."

The NDIS provided funding for support workers who helped Carmel manage Brayden's behavioural concerns, and assist Brayden to engage with his community through basketball, cooking and going to the football.

"Our support worker was like an angel, she just peeled back every layer because she had the time and experience, she really got it.

"She started really understanding Brayden's needs, his sensory issues and she was able to start putting things in place and also give me the right tools to continue that.

"Brayden started to feel understood, she was like a friend."

Brayden also receives NDIS funding for speech therapy and occupational therapy, which are helping to improve his conversational skills and his fine and gross motor skills.

"I have a different child now, we have the tools to keep him motivated to stay on track.

"This whole process has given Brayden so much confidence and independence, he's a happier boy, he's got a big smile on his face."

With Brayden turning 18 next year and embarking on adulthood, Carmel said her son now has purpose and a promising future ahead.

"Brayden's such an active boy, our long term goal is that he is able to live independently.

“It would be lovely to see him have a part time job and just continue to be happy and healthy, it’s now a realistic possibility.”

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