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Flynn Rigby has chosen a life dedicated to the service of others.

He brings kindness and happiness to everything he does. And he does a lot.

Despite significant challenges, with support from the NDIS, he is busy helping people and his community is loving him for it.

‘With my NDIS plan, I can volunteer at lots of places and do work experience because someone is there to help me and make sure I’m safe,’ Flynn says.

Flynn, 21, lives with an intellectual disability and autism.

He didn’t speak at all until 9, when stem cell treatment produced the results his mum Jenni had always hoped for.

‘The first Mother’s Day after his treatment, he said ‘I love you mummy’. I’d wished and wished all those Mother’s Days that he could do that. It was amazing,’ Jenni says.

Flynn was one of Cairns’ first NDIS participants when it rolled out in Far North Queensland in 2018.

He has come a long way since then, and now nothing holds him back.

‘The NDIS has allowed Flynn to develop his work and social skills and lets him be a part of his community as well as a change maker within that community,’ Jenni says.

Flynn writes a travel blog, Everybody Deserves A Holiday , reviewing accommodation and destinations to help other neurodivergent people.

‘I thought it might be helpful for others who have an invisible disability to read about the things that make travel easier for me,’ Flynn says.

‘Lots of people read my blog and send me messages about it saying they are going to travel and try going to new places.’

Flynn is also gaining work and life skills while helping at a Cairns café run by a disability services provider, and at Eat Real, a commercial kitchen with a disability training program.

‘I peel the potatoes, wipe down the benches, and do some cleaning. I am also learning to do the stocktake of ingredients,’ Flynn says.

On top of all that, Flynn also volunteers with the Salvation Army and St Vincent de Paul, where he is supported with workplace assistance.

‘I volunteer because I really like meeting new people and doing things to make them happy,’ Flynn says.

Flynn’s work has not gone unnoticed.

He was recently recognised with other finalists at the Queensland Community Achievement Awards.

‘I think I was nominated because I try to help people and I like to inspire others to try new things,’ Flynn says.

Flynn is a team player and helping him live his chosen life takes a team effort, much of which is funded through his NDIS plan.

NDIS employment support helped him get job ready before work experience placement.

Flynn learns how to do new tasks with the help of an occupational therapist, and he is improving his speaking skills with support from a speech therapist, all funded through the NDIS.

‘My support workers also take me out on the weekend to a youth group, discos, bowling, and to see concerts or meet my friends,’ Flynn says.

Jenni is proud of Flynn and understands the importance of the support he gets to help him achieve his potential.

‘The NDIS has made a huge impact on Flynn’s life, it has allowed him to grow as a person, follow his dreams and gain independence,’ Jenni said.

‘And it’s been a game changer for our family. We have the freedom to work and do what we need to in our day-to-day life.’

Flynn carries a positive energy with him wherever he goes.

‘No matter how hard things have been for him to learn to do, he's always done it with a smile

on his face,' Jenni says.

'That's been the blessing of Flynn.'

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