

**Hailey— it has made me into the person I am today and I can finally say I'm pretty proud of myself with how far I've come from this life changing event.**

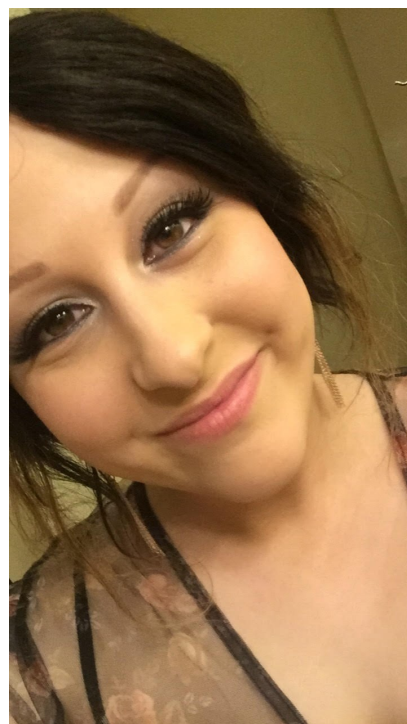
I was first diagnosed with Alopecia in November 2010, just about to finish in grade 10. Being a 15 year old at an all girl's school, I'm sure you can already imagine how difficult life became very quickly. Being at that peak age of puberty, I was already going through all the joyous things young girls go through (yay for us right?) so it really wasn't the best timing, especially considering it developed into Alopecia Universalis a few short weeks later.

I'm not going to sugar coat it, it was an extremely rough time during the last few years of high school. Having to change schools because of certain issues some students and teachers had with my appearance did not help improve my stress and anxiety levels at all.

I know it all sounds horrible and yeah, it kinda was, but it has made me into the person I am today and I can finally say I'm pretty proud of myself with how far I've come from this life changing event. It hasn't just been me battling though, my family have spent thousands of dollars and plenty of hours trying to help my situation in whatever possible way they could. Being my mother's only daughter was obviously heart breaking for her to watch. She would constantly say 'If I could trade places with you and lose all my hair instead, I would', which broke my heart even more.

Now, 8 years later at 23, I would never have guessed I'd be where I am. I got really lucky with my job as it takes me all over the place and nearly a year ago now I moved permanently from

Brisbane to Sarina (Mackay region). Within a month of living here, I met someone with the kindest and most loving soul. My partner has shown me that it's okay to be a little different, it's okay to be scared and it's okay to be brave. He has shown me that not only am I beautiful, bald and brave, but I'm also a human being like anyone else... Just with a shinier head :)



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