

Matilda's star and new HeartKids ambassador shares family experience with congenital heart disease.

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[Hayley Raso](#) is an Australian football player, currently playing for Everton in the English FA Women's Super League. Raso has set up residence in the UK, where she is pursuing her dream of playing club and international football.

Hayley has also played for Australia's national team, the Matildas, since 2012 and is currently in camp getting ready for the Olympic Games in Tokyo.

Growing up on the Gold Coast, Raso worked tirelessly to become one of the key players for the Matildas. She also played for the under 20's national team, the Young Matildas. Her journey has taken her across the globe, competing in many countries at major tournaments including two FIFA Women's World Cups and AFC Women's Asian Cups. Hayley became an official HeartKids ambassador in 2021 after witnessing firsthand, the impact that congenital heart disease has had on her family after her brother Lachlan was diagnosed with the disease.

Lachlan (now 29 years old), at six weeks of age took a turn for the worse when he suddenly turned blue for the first time. Following months of repeated episodes, it took doctors many tests and examinations to determine the cause. At four years old, he was officially diagnosed with an atrial septal defect, a form of congenital heart disease. This required yearly check-ups until he was given the all clear at 18 years of age. However, in 2014, at 22 years old, Lachlan was diagnosed with partial anomalous pulmonary venous drainage (PAPVD), a rare congenital cardiac defect that is associated with sinus venosus atrial septal defect.

At 23 years of age, Lachlan had open heart surgery to repair and correct the PAPVD and also had a NUSS bar inserted for pectus excavatum. As of now, he is undergoing yearly check-ups and leading a normal, active life working as a civil engineer on the Gold Coast.

"Congenital heart disease has a big impact on not only the person with CHD but also the family and friends. I wanted to help raise awareness of CHD and funds for HeartKids as they are the only organisation that supports all those impacted by this disease. Lachlan is doing great now and has had fantastic support from our family and friends, but not all families are this lucky - this is where HeartKids steps in. I am excited to be an Ambassador for HeartKids and to play a part in helping other families on this lifelong journey" says Hayley.

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