

# Valerie's Story



Though her transplant didn't happen in time to save her life, Valerie's daughter, Dana, was able to give the gift of sight.

Our youngest, Dana, was a bright, stubborn girl who knew what she wanted and usually found a way to get it. We envisioned a bright future for her, figuring that with her determination she could do anything. Well, she didn't get to grow up and change the world, but she did get to make a difference. When she was only two, a virus attacked her heart, putting her on the list for a transplant. Tenacious as usual, she fought for life as hard and as long as she could. Statistics beyond our control were against her, and she died waiting. After her damaged heart stopped for the last time and we gave permission to stop resuscitation, we asked, "Can she be a donor?" We hoped that she could save someone the way she needed saving. We hoped to help other parents avoid the grief that we now faced. But, the final efforts to keep her poor heart beating damaged her other organs and only her corneas could be used. So Dana's eyes gave sight to two people: gifts whose importance we did not truly grasp until we met a corneal transplant recipient. We miss Dana every day but are grateful for opportunities to express our undying love for our child by sharing her story and our positive feeling about donation.

Valerie, Donor Mother  
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