

# Love & Dream Without Limits

Addison  
&  
Rebecca  
Bortnick



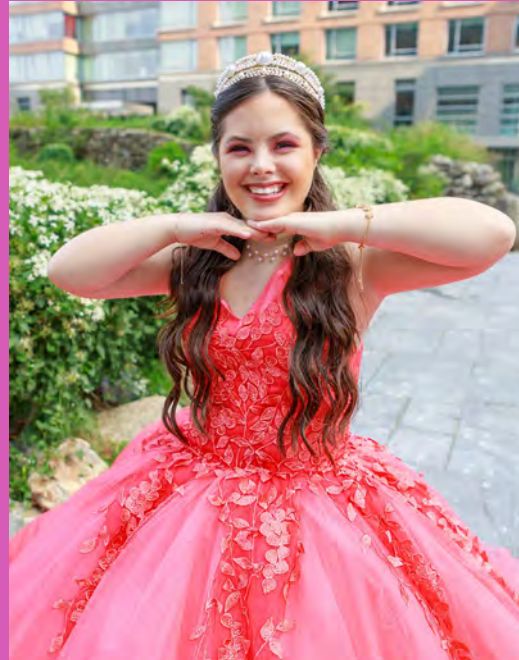
# Meet Addison



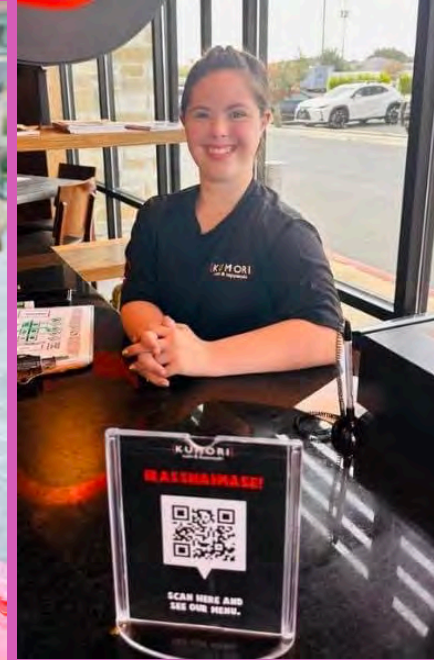
Public Speaker



Advocate



Model



Employee



Business Owner

# #GIRLBOSS

I am a powerful, passionate 17 year old young woman with Down Syndrome and I have big big big dreams!

# I am

- 2018 Easterseals Advocate of the Year
- 2020 Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Rising Star
- District Twelve 4-H Champion in public speaking
- National Down Syndrome Society Ambassador
- All American Cheerleader
- Mcallen High School Varsity Cheerleader
- Special Olympic Athlete
- ~Debi Lou Model
- Cover Girl for Childrens Ministry Magazine
- I was honored at the Texas State Capital for my active role in spreading awareness and acceptance for Down Syndrome and much more!





This year I got my first job being a hostess at Kumori Sushi Restaurant. I love the feeling of being a hard working independent woman!

Also, I made one of my big dreams come true last September. I got to walk the runway in New York Fashion Week! It was magical!

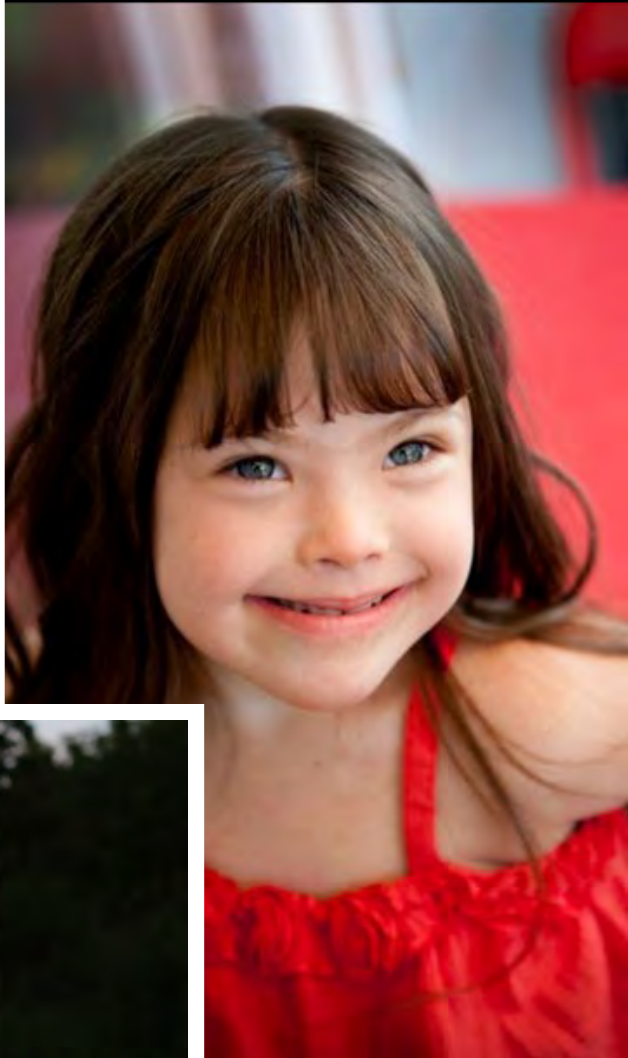
I am proud to say that I am living my dream life, but it's taken a lot of hard work to get to where I am today.

# Meet Rebecca



## OUR FAMILY

Steve, Rebecca, Hayden, Addison, & Brady



And so our  
journey begin  
through the  
blessing of  
adoption.



For this child we have prayed.

~Samuel 1:27~



When I was a little girl I couldn't speak with words. My parents helped teach me sign language to communicate. My favorite show to watch was signing time with Alex and Leah! Have you heard of it?



It goes like this. It's signing time with Alex and Leah come and play!

It was my favorite show! If you have little kids I recommend you use it as a tool to help them learn sign language too!



I was learning how to communicate. It helped me express myself in so many ways, then my words started to come out.

# Little girls with dreams



Become women  
with vision

Once my words started to come. My favorite therapy was using a mirror to watch the way my tongue moved with different words. Life is in the words we speak and the power of the tongue.

## Words shape our thinking.

That's why it's so important we speak life and positivity. I grew my confidence by sitting in front of the mirror speaking powerful words to myself!

- **I AM SMART**
- **I AM KIND**
- **I AM FUNNY**
- **I AM IMPORTANT**
- **I AM LOVED**
- **I BELIEVE IN MYSELF**
- **I AM FEARLESS**

Even now at 17 years old, this is so powerful for me. It helps me build my confidence. Down syndrome to me is my strength because I know who I am. I have a big heart with a big purpose for my life.



# Fearfully & Wonderfully Made

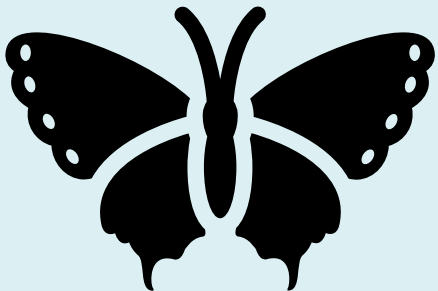
~PSALM 139:14~



I learned at a young age that Everything is hard before it is easy and when we make mistakes, we learn from them.

This made me feel excited to grow and learn. Always practice makes progress because nobody is perfect. Perfection is not a human quality.

With the right love, support, and environment anything is possible!

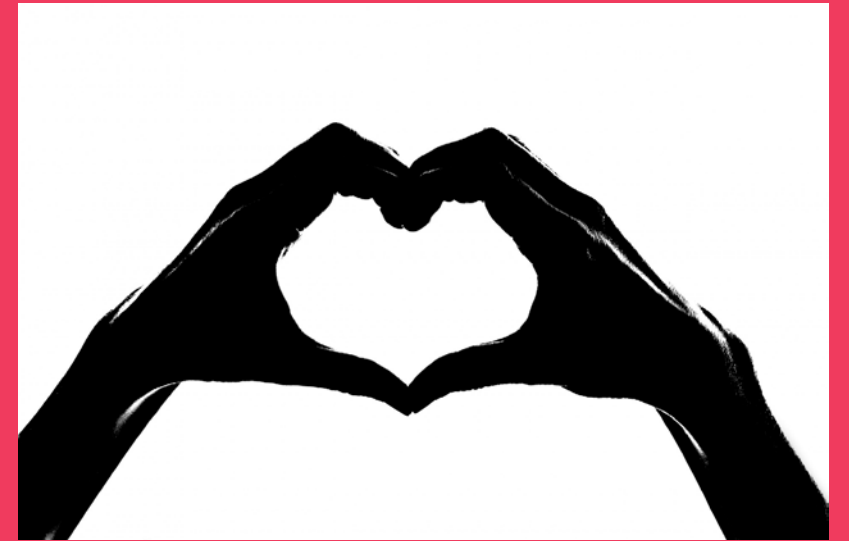


She is clothed in **STRENGTH** &  
**DIGNITY** and she **LAUGHS** without  
fear of the future  
~ Proverbs 31:25 ~





No one knows you're  
child better than you.  
Not even professionals!



Follow your heart.  
It knows the way



**When a flower  
doesn't bloom, you  
fix the environment  
in which it grows,  
not the flower**

**~Alexander Den Heijer**

**Special Education is a service NOT a place**

I feel empowered just like all of us do when we feel in charge of our day. I love my routines that helps me understand what to expect from the day and the expectations that are my responsibilities. When I feel prepared I am able to put out my best, and be my best self!

In Elementary school my routine was very important to me. Also having clear defined boundaries for my behavior.

Believe it or not a lot of the time when I was little I didn't listen to my teachers, because I wanted to do my own thing and have fun! Can you blame me... Haha!

Bad behavior is communication so if I was having a bad behavior it was communication that something wasn't working for me.



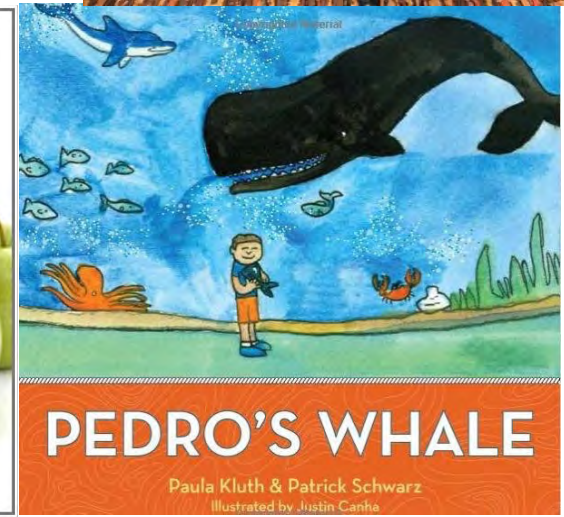
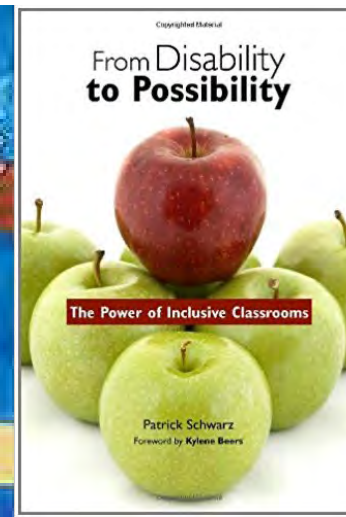
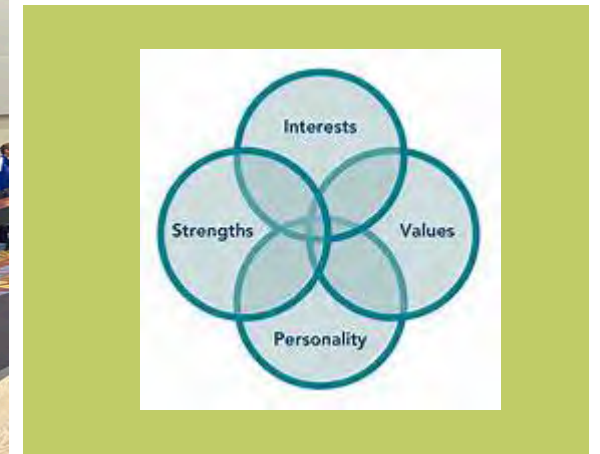
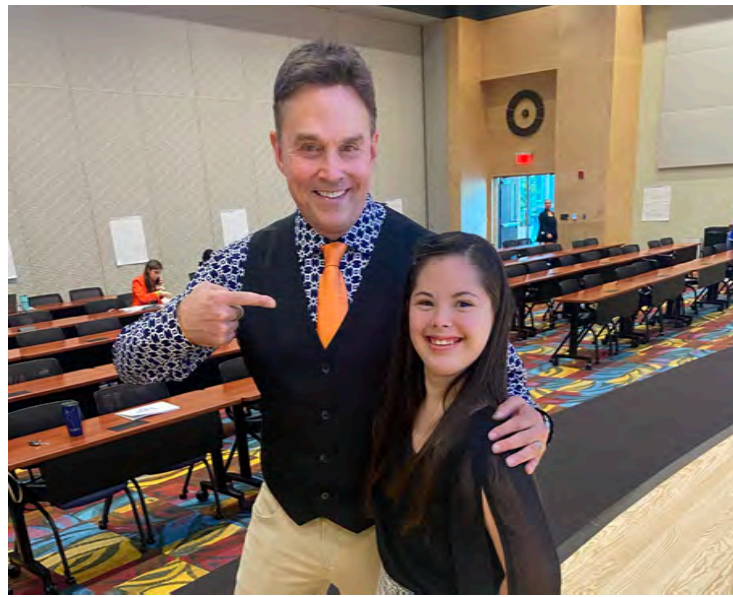
So you know what my parents and teachers did! They made learning fun for me using what I was passionate about which was:

- DISNEY PRINCESSES
- TAYLOR SWIFT MUSIC
- CHOCOLATE



# Just Give Him the Whale!

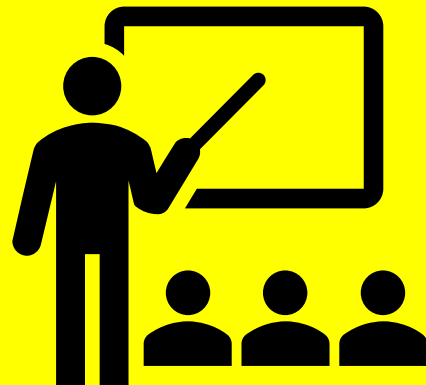
~Patrick Schwarz & Paula Kluth



# 5 things that really helped me in school

- 1) Being included with my peers in the general education classroom
- 2) Knowing my daily routine and clear expectations for the day
- 3) My behavior chart to hold me accountable for my behavior
- 4) My rewards
- 5) High Expectations

**This for me is a  
powerful combo!**





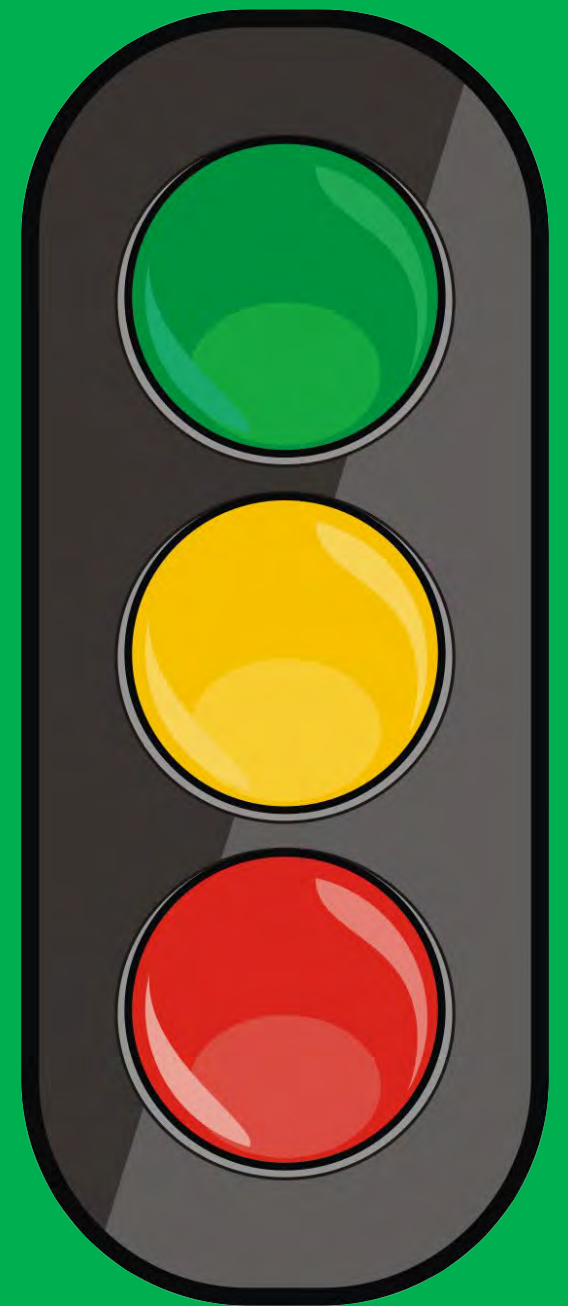
In elementary school I used a simple stop light behavior chart that really held me be accountable for my behavior.

~ **GREEN** for great days

~ **YELLOW** for not so great listening days

~ **RED** those were the worst, bad behavior days

My teachers & parents partnered up and created a circle of support around me with a daily communication sheet. This helped me know that they were on the same team and I couldn't get away with bad behavior no matter how hard I tried.





On the days I got green we celebrate. My family always got so excited when I came home with a green day! They would praise me and tell me how awesome I did! It made me feel so good! We would jump up and down! Hip Hop Hooray Addison got all greens today!! We would dance and we would laugh together celebrating how good I did! This made it so much fun to work hard to get a green day.

Then on the red days, not so fun. I would get a privilege taken away and my parents would talk to me about what happened and why. What caused me to have the bad behavior and ways to make it better next time.

My parents & Teachers were a team and I felt supported! This really helped me and made me excited to make my parents and teachers proud with green days also let's not forget I didn't want to miss out on my delicious chocolate, princess stickers and Taylor Swift music!

I was always held to the same behavior expectations as the other students. I didn't get a free pass because of my disability.

I can do all things who Christ  
who strengthens me  
~Philippians 4:13~



# Person Centered Planning

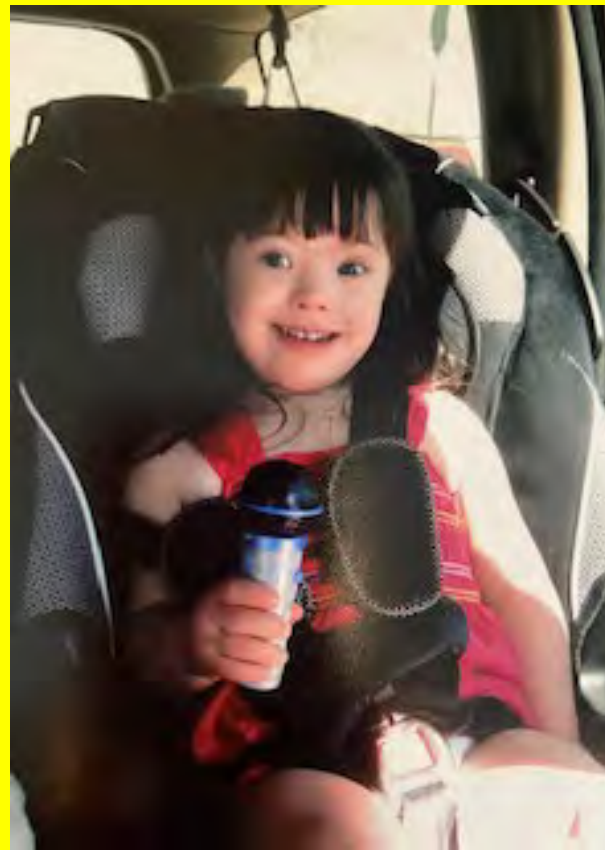
# POP QUIZ

Ask Addison  
any state and  
let's see if she  
can guess the  
capital to show  
how well her  
flash cards  
worked!





When I was a little girl I would carry a little microphone around with me everywhere I went. It made me feel powerful! I knew from a young age that I had an important message to share with the world.



A message of Hope, Love, and Encouragement to each and every one of you to never let anyone limit you or hold you back from your full potential. YOU are here for a purpose and You are perfect just the way God created you to be.



**I can do all things through Christ who gives me strengthens me ~ philippians 4:13**

The only disability in  
life is a bad attitude.

~ Scott Hamilton~



**1954 Supreme Court:  
Brown V. Board of Education:  
A sense of inferiority affects the  
motivation of a child to learn.  
Segregation... has a tendency  
to retard the educational &  
mental development of the  
segregated children and to  
deprive them of...benefits they  
would receive in an... integrated  
school system...We conclude  
that...the doctrine of “separate  
but equal” has no place.  
Separate educational facilities  
are inherently unequal.**



REAL  
WORLD



You can't prepare kids for  
an integrated life in  
a segregated classroom.

~ Lou Brown ~





*“There is no greater disability in society, than the inability to see a person as more.”*

*Robert M. Hensel*



 [www.kimbaggusphotography.com](http://www.kimbaggusphotography.com)

A hand holding a red marker is shown crossing out the word "DISABILITY" written in a black, outlined, sans-serif font. The hand is positioned in the lower-left foreground, with the red marker tip touching the word. The background is a soft-focus image of a person's face, likely a child, looking towards the camera.

~~DISABILITY~~

**People with Down syndrome and other disabilities are valuable, capable, and unique! We are PEOPLE FIRST!**

**We need an inclusive school, inclusive community, inclusive workplace to thrive and the truth is so do you. We all learn and grow from each other.**

**We should never have to prove our worth to the world or prove that we are good enough to be included. God doesn't make mistakes. We all deserve to be loved and accepted as we are.**



**Be STRONG & COUAGEOUS.  
Do not be afraid or discouraged.  
For the Lord your God is with you  
wherever you go.  
~ Joshua 1:9 ~**





**We are on a mission to:**

**Replace FEAR with LOVE**

**Replace SEGREGATION with INCLUSION**

**Replace DOUBT with KNOWLEDGE**

## Co-Teaching is:

A classroom in which a general education and special education teacher jointly provide instruction to a class that has students with and without disabilities.



# ELLIE STAFFORD AGE 5 KINDERGARTEN

*Teach me to soar and I will*  
-Kelle Hampton

## VISION STATEMENT

We envision our daughter living a life of choice. We envision her having relationships she feels are valuable. In her future we envision her doing work that she enjoys and that makes her feel productive. We envision our daughter living a happy and meaningful life surrounded by love and support.

## STRENGTHS

- Visual learner
- Advanced Reader
- Knows ABC's and Letter Sounds
- Can count to 30
- Social and Kind
- Funny
- Smart
- Great Friend
- Fast Learner
- Excellent Memory

## WHAT DOESN'T WORK

- Being Rushed
- Sudden Change in Activity
- Negative Talk
- Yelling
- Assuming I Don't Understand

**I LOVE:** My Parents, My Brothers  
Will and Luke, Taco Bell,  
Dancing and Rap Music.

## WHAT WORKS FOR ME

- Patience
- Peer Modeling
- Schedule and Routines
- First/Then Visuals
- Picture Cues for Tasks
- Believe in My Abilities
- Praise Me For My Achievements
- Warn Me About Transitions

## WHAT I'M WORKING ON

- Talking in Sentences
- Fine Motor Skills, like Writing, Cutting Paper and Coloring!
- Gross Motor Skills, like Running!
- Following Directions
- Conversational Speech



# Person Centered Planning one page profile example

I am proud to say that our hard work paid off and I am 100% fully included in the general education classroom with support. I am doing so good in school! My peers are my best teachers.

I teach them and they teach me. Isn't that awesome! Life is good!

**"When EVERYONE is INCLUDED, everyone WINS."**

~ Jesse Jackson ~





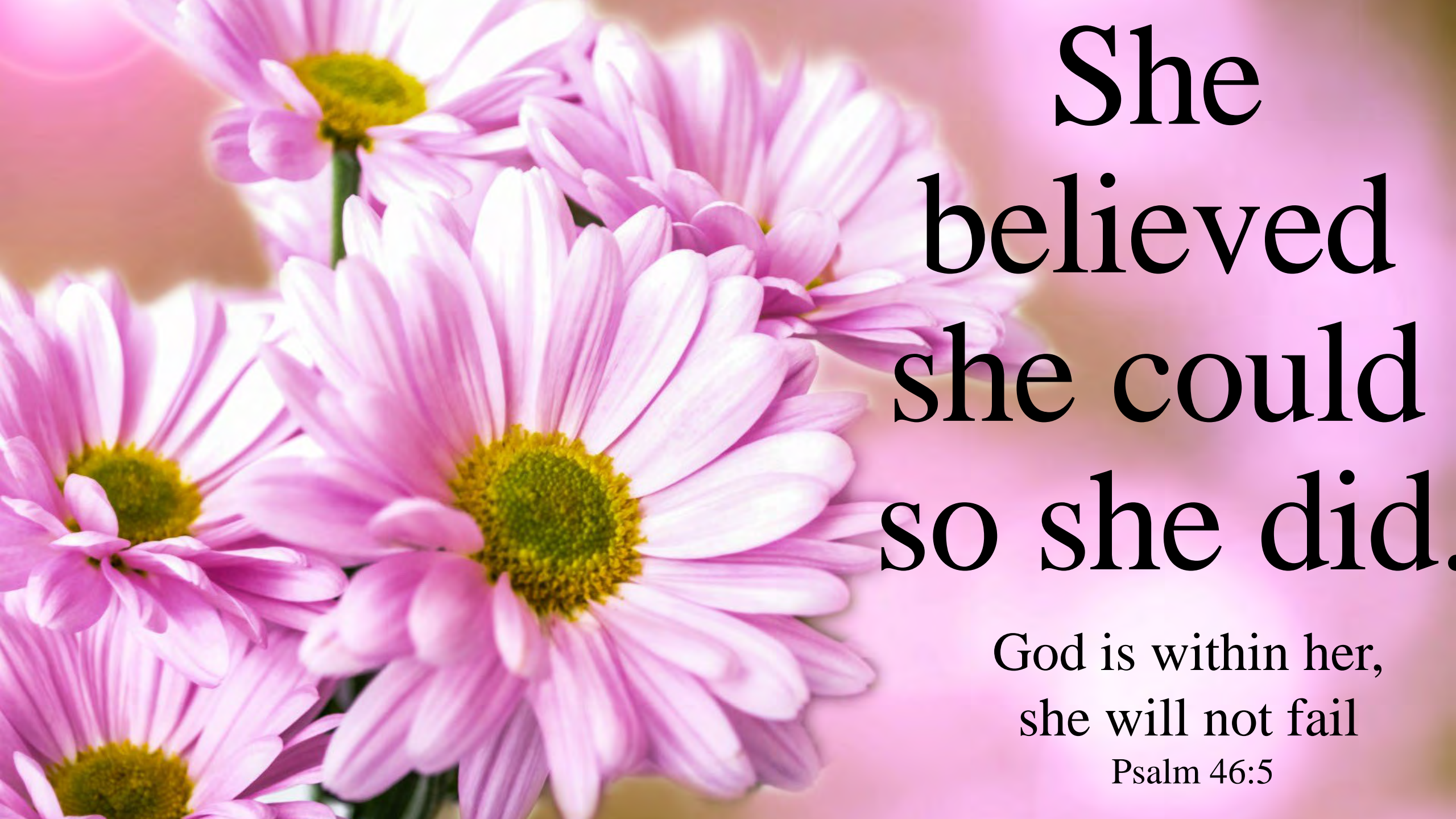
One of my biggest challenges entering middle school and high school was growing my independence. The schools were a lot bigger. Navigating my school independently without an aide by my side was so important to me. I always said, as a teenager having an aide by my side all day babysitting me was like peer repellent. Once I broke up with my aide it opened the door to walk the halls independently during passing periods. It opened the door to relationships and it also helped build my confidence.

“  
Believe you can  
and you're  
halfway there.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT



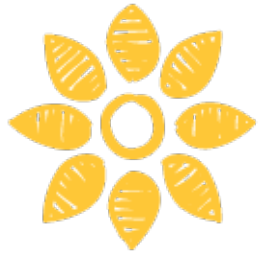




She  
believed  
she could  
so she did.

God is within her,  
she will not fail

Psalm 46:5



# DELIGHTFUL SPACES

## ORGANIZING & DESIGN, LLC

When my parents asked me what I wanted to do for work in my adult years. My answer was to do something I'm good at and enjoy doing, help people, build relationships. My dream job would be to work alongside my family because we have so much fun together. So we came up with an awesome idea using my organizing abilities and love for helping people. Since organization and routine have been so helpful for me in my life. I wanted to share my gifts with others.

I am proud to say that with the help of Advocates Searching for Independence. I became an entrepreneur with my Business Delightful Spaces Organizing & Design. Together my family and I help others get organized with purpose, simplicity, and routine so our clients can have more time for the things that matter most in their lives. It's been a fun way to enter the work field being a girl boss. In addition to my awesome job at Kumori SUSHI restaurant.



I love showing the world what people with disabilities are capable of when we are not limited but given the education, inclusive environment, and support we need to help us thrive and be set up to live the life of our dreams!

~ DON'T LIMIT US ~





Let all that you do be done in  
LOVE, because LOVE  
never fails.  
~ Corinthians 16:1~

# FOLLOW ADDISON BORTNICK'S JOURNEY ON:

YOUTUBE ~ Addison Bortnick

FACEBOOK ~ Addison Bortnick

INSTAGRAM ~ Addison Bortnick

TIKTOK ~ @AddisonBortnick3

