

Jordan's inspiring story

# The STAR of the show

My son had his fair share of tough times, but now his future is brighter than ever

Raquel Blackwell, 38, Hobart, Tas.

**B**ursting through the door, my son, Jordan, threw his school bag on the floor and stormed off to his room.

"What's wrong, sweetheart?" I frowned, following him.

"They called me Burger King today," he said, lip trembling. "They shoved

me up against the lockers and teased me."

My heart broke for him.

At 65kg, Jordan, 10, was overweight for his age, but it wasn't because he was a big eater or lazy. He had a club foot and had been undergoing treatment and surgeries at hospital to correct his posture for many years.

He couldn't stand on his feet for long or the pain got too great, so the weight piled on.

Over the next few years Jordan put up a resistance to going to school. Kids bullied him constantly, even encouraging him to take his own life.

Enough was enough. I changed his schools and, thankfully, we saw an immediate difference in personality.

The once bright and bubbly boy who loved to sing and act returned.

Jordan made new friends, his grades improved and he even began raising funds for the hospital by dressing up as Santa and collecting money to buy sick kids presents for Christmas.



Jordan bought toys for sick kids ...



Just some of the money he's raised and donated



... with the money he raised as Santa

One day he came home from school beaming with excitement. He'd signed up to participate in the Mr/Miss Diamond Beauty Pageant, which had no age, height or weight criteria.

*I want to win because I want to let people know that even though I was bullied, I can still make a contribution to my community,* he wrote in his application.

I was the proudest mum when Jordan was selected as a national finalist and had to do 50 public appearances promoting his cause - raising funds for the hospital.

I drove him all around Tassie, where he spoke at shopping centres, parks and charity events, talking to strangers and explaining why he was doing this.

Some people made fun of him for his weight, but Jordan wasn't bothered.

"I don't care about them anymore," he said, face filled with determination.

To prepare for the catwalk,

he started strutting around the lounge room. He was so confident that I knew he would be a hit no matter what.

"It doesn't matter if you win or lose, I'm proud of you," I said, hugging him.

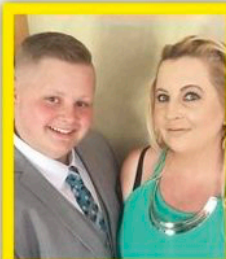
He took out first place.

"This is the happiest day of my life," he said.

Since then, Jordan's confidence has skyrocketed and he appears publicly as an ambassador and judge for other pageants. Recently,

he starred in the school musical and is keen to continue performing.

His story is a reminder to everyone that you can always shine and must never give up.



Jordan all ready for his Year 10 leaving dinner



Jordan with Miss Diamond Australia Brooke Cochrane

## JORDAN TELLS TAKE 5:

"No matter how much you're told you can't do something, don't listen. You can do anything you put your mind to. You've just got to believe in yourself."