



Susanne is dedicated to caring for her brother Kenny, but she needs our help.

When Kenny was 22 months old, he was diagnosed with Autism. His mother, Lenore, hoped it was just a speech delay but when his overall development wasn't progressing she knew it was true.

Kenny is 26 now and like a lot of people with Autism, Kenny doesn't like being around people he doesn't know, and changes in life can upset him.

Tragically Kenny lost his father John to cancer in February last year, making life even harder for a family already stretched to the limit.

For Susanne, Kenny's sister, losing her father and having to take on more to support Kenny is a lot of responsibility for a young woman, still at university.

Susanne's first call was to DSA to tell us what was going on.

"I called Jade, Kenny's support worker to tell her what was going on - I told her we are going to need a lot of support.

I was trying to help dad while he was sick and often showed up to DSA in pyjamas to bring something for Kenny. I was exhausted.

At that stage I think DSA helped me as much as they were helping Kenny. They were so understanding, without that emotional support, I just don't think I would have functioned."

Susanne is tougher than she gives herself credit for. While she was trying to keep the family together and mourning the loss of her father she was also working towards her second degree, and plans for becoming a social worker when she finishes university.

Still, it's a lot of responsibility for a 28-year-old but there's nothing she wouldn't do for her brother.

The difference DSA can make can save a family from reaching the breaking point.

One day Susanne would like to take Kenny on a holiday, but even then, she would need someone to go with her – and only someone Kenny knows and trusts.

It's hard for Kenny to express himself, but for the past 7-8 years, he has found comfort in the same trusted faces from DSA.

He loves going out with DSA staff which keeps him connected with his community and avoids the feeling of isolation that comes from staying indoors.

It's crucial that DSA has the means to support Kenny's complex emotional needs.

Every day we see the strain that a disability can put on a family, and as a non-profit social enterprise, we rely on help from the community to continue our vital services year round.

It takes a lot of time, staff and energy to support every family that desperately needs our care and support – which is why we have more than 70 sites across NSW and employ over 900 dedicated staff.

Kenny's family is just one of the 1,478 families we've helped in the last 12 months.

Please consider a tax deductible **donation** today to ensure more families, like Kenny's, can access such critical support.

Thank you for your support, together we can achieve so much.

All gifts of \$2 or more are tax deductible this financial year if received before June 30th.

