



Gracie is a trained seizure alert dog.

The girls are best friends!

Amazing Aussie besties

My puppy saved my life...twice!

With Gracie at her daughter's side, Adelaide mum Sarah Kalisimeras can rest easy

At any moment and without warning, Georgia Kalisimeras could suffer a life-threatening seizure. But with her labrador keeping watch, now she's like any child of her age.

That's because Georgia, 7, knows Gracie will raise the roof if she gets "sleepy head" – the first sign she's about to suffer a dangerous seizure.

The warning gives Georgia the chance to get to a safe place and

readies nearby adults, who can ensure injury is minimised.

After just four weeks with the Kalisimeras family in Adelaide's west, seizure alert dog Gracie has already come to the rescue twice by barking furiously.

"I burst into tears to see it. It was amazing – purely amazing!" says Sarah, 37. "I was worried as Georgia isn't a dog person, but they've bonded. It's magnificent – they're best friends!"

Dangerous condition

Georgia was born with Muenke syndrome, a disorder that meant part of her skull was fused. At 10 weeks she had surgery to ensure her face formed properly.

Later she developed epilepsy, which doctors now believe is a result of her rare syndrome.

Georgia suffered her first seizure at a family barbecue in 2012. She was overcome with a strange feeling, her face turned blue, she couldn't talk, and she struggled to walk.

"It lasted quite a few minutes and it was terrifying," says Sarah.

It was the first of many frightening attacks to come.

When Georgia developed an allergic reaction to her rescue medication, Sarah and her husband Jimmy were at their wits' end.

Desperate for a solution, they investigated using a service dog trained to smell the metabolic change in epilepsy patients.

"I didn't think it was real," says Sarah. "So I researched it and contacted the Epilepsy Council, and they confirmed it."

Sarah raised \$35,000 to buy Gracie, who was trained at the Centre for Service and Therapy Dogs in Melbourne.

And it didn't take long for her to realise how special Gracie is.

"On our second trip to Melbourne when Gracie was training, Georgia rested her head on my shoulder and said, 'Thank you, Mummy, I'm so happy!'"



Sarah is thrilled Georgia now has a special helper.