

# Meet Baby Charlie, the doll with Down syndrome

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Kmart has launched a new range of Down syndrome dolls in what is being labelled a big win for disability representation.

The new dolls – named Baby Charlie with Down Syndrome – launched this week and are \$15.

Baby Charlie joins other new dolls on Kmart shelves including one who uses a wheelchair, and another who is vision impaired, and another on crutches.

Down Syndrome Australia\* has expressed its support, stating they were contacted by Kmart before the development of the dolls.

“They reached out to DSA early in the process to consult with us about their ideas, and we’re happy to see dolls with Down syndrome in their new line of inclusive\* toys,” DSA management said.

Down Syndrome Australia CEO, Dr Ellen Skladzien, said she is pleased to see the positive steps Kmart is taking to be more inclusive.

“This new range of dolls from Kmart highlights the importance of introducing diversity\* and representation,” Dr Skladzien said.

“Many members of our community have expressed excitement that children with Down syndrome are represented in this new range of toys.”

In a statement on its website, DSA said the dolls “represent the diversity of the world we live in. It means that children are exposed to that diversity from an early age and can find dolls that look like them or their friends.”

It also acknowledged that not everyone was completely happy with the dolls.

“Down Syndrome Australia are also aware that some members of our community have concerns about some of the visual aspects the Baby Charlie range. We hope that Kmart will review this feedback and take it on board to develop other dolls with Down syndrome in the future which are representative of a wider range of children who have Down syndrome.”

Parents have posted positive comments about the dolls on social media, expressing their joy that children with the condition finally have a doll they can relate to.

“Kmart coming in strong and selling Down Syndrome dolls, all is right in the world in this moment,” one woman posted to Facebook.

Another Facebook user whose son has Down syndrome labelled the dolls a “great start”.

“I think it’s a great start on inclusion ... I will be buying some to donate to his school,” she said.

“Kmart Australia is showing how to do inclusion! Their doll range includes LGBTQ\* families, people of colour, physical disabilities and now a doll with Down Syndrome!” another user said.

“Representation matters and seeing people from all walks of life is so important.”

<https://www.kidsnews.com.au/humanities/meet-baby-charlie-the-doll-with-down-syndrome/news-story/472c65b367705c33d516803eca70ea42>