



09 OCT, 2019

## Standing up for life's little treasures

Maribyrnong Weekly, Melbourne

Page 1 of 2

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South Kingsville couple Sandhya and Benjamin Burriss have four children, three of whom couldn't wait to get into the world.

Florelle, age three, and two-year-old twins, Obi and Jai, are all "prem babies" who were born before 37 weeks gestation.

The family, whose latest addition, Kester, nine months, was born at 37 weeks, is taking part in this month's Walk for Prems.

The walk is the largest annual fundraiser for Life's Little Treasures Foundation supporting families of babies born sick or premature.

"Flo came at 35 weeks," Ms Burriss said.

"She was actually growth-restricted so we were expecting her to come sooner rather than later because she was measuring small the whole time.

"She was in special care for four weeks.

"She was 1664 grams when she was born."

The twins were born at 32 weeks, weighing 1769 grams (Obi) and 1796 grams (Jai).

"They were spontaneous labour so I didn't know they were coming early, but apparently 64 per cent of multiple births are premature births," Ms Burriss said.

"They were in special care for five weeks and intensive care as well because they needed breathing support.

"When I was in special care with the kids, it's very isolating. You feel like you're on your own and friends and family don't really understand the situation until you're in that situation."

Ms Burriss has started Mama Genie, an online hub of products, services and resources for families with premmie children in the neonatal and special care units.

Walk for Prems, now in its 10th year, is on in Melbourne on Sunday, October 27 from 9am. People who can't attend in person can take part as a Virtual Walk for Prems Team member.

Register at [www.walkforprems.org.au](http://www.walkforprems.org.au)

**Goya Dmytryshchak**



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Benjamin and Sandhya Burriss with children Kester, Obi, Jai and Florelle. (Damjan Janevski)