

React

GIVING DEPTH TO SHORT LIVES

Please pass this
newsletter on to a
friend to help
even more
children

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Exercising With Eddie

Geraldine was eagerly awaiting the arrival of her baby boy, her pregnancy was smooth with no difficulties but at 29 weeks, Geraldine unexpectedly went into early labour. Tests revealed a bleed on baby Eddie's brain which required urgent treatment. Over the next few months, Eddie developed like any healthy baby, until one morning, he suffered a seizure and lost the ability to do anything such as maintain head control, eat or drink. "It was devastating knowing that everything he had learned in the past 8 months had just vanished completely and that there was no improving from there."

Now aged four, Eddie lives with severe brain damage, global developmental delay and epilepsy. Despite his conditions, he is a smiley, happy little boy who everyone adores. "It's rare you get a bad day with Eddie, he is so popular with people and never fusses. He even has a list of wives! Everyone absolutely loves him. Eddie has brightened up our large family, and he's changed our lives for the better. His brothers and sisters are more compassionate to circumstances and we try to give Eddie a normal life as we don't want him to feel isolated."

Eddie is unable to walk, crawl or talk and can only roll onto his side. Looking for a way to make him mobile and with the assistance of an Occupational Therapist, Geraldine found a trike which would meet Eddie's needs and support him appropriately. However, it was far beyond the family's budget and unavailable through statutory funding. With every avenue exhausted, Geraldine made an application to React:

"React has been amazing, the application process is so simple. Normally everything has a waiting list and you sometimes think whether there is any point bothering. Other applications are also so stressful and the questions are so personal that I don't feel comfortable in answering. React offered a straightforward process and we received a response so quickly. The trike is perfect, it lets Eddie see a different view of the world around him as he's fully supported and he loves it. It's allowing him to get the exercise he needs and when he's tired, we can just turn the pedals off and push him around. The good thing as well is that it can be adjusted when Eddie grows."

React has been able to provide Eddie with a specialist trike thanks to generous donations from its supporters.



Shernice

Support For Shernice

Sixteen year old Shernice is a vibrant and typical teenage girl, with a love of music and fashion, who enjoys socialising with friends and family. But for Shernice, life can be difficult, as she lives with Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy and Moya Moya disease (a rare neurological condition). She is wheelchair dependent, and requires assistance with most daily activities.

Surviving on income support, her mum Joanne first contacted React for assistance when a specialist chair was required. Shernice still uses that same chair, ten years later.

Earlier this year, the small family were struggling when their cooker and fridge freezer broke down at the same time. "I was feeling very low and felt so relieved when React said they were able to help us again. It was a huge weight off my shoulders."

RAPID EFFECTIVE ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN WITH POTENTIALLY TERMINAL ILLNESS

React Running Fever

React has caught running fever this year and our fabulous runners have been hard at work completing marathons, half marathons and 10k's in aid of React's children. We'd like to thank every single one of them who have competed in a race for React and have literally gone the extra mile. A special thanks to the Citroen Wells team, Kellie Snow for bravely completing the Brighton Marathon and all runners who took part in the British 10k and Richmond Runfest. We hope to see you all again next year for some more fun-filled running adventures!



Larry's Super Swim

On Saturday 3rd September, Larry triumphantly took to the waters in this year's Chills Swim Event, courageously swimming an incredible 5.25 miles, the full length of Coniston Water in the Lake District. Choppy tides and icy temperatures were no match for Larry and he completed the course in a speedy time of 2 hours and 28 minutes. Due to his incredible achievement, Larry raised a tremendous £1,235.41 for React families. We would like to congratulate Larry on his amazing accomplishment and also thank him for his very kind support of React's work.



Larry

200 Mile Cycle!

Tynemouth to Edinburgh. Raising an amazing £1,000, React Trustee Jeremy said "As a father of two active, healthy teenagers I consider myself extremely lucky and like to do all that I can to help those parents who have not been so fortunate."

We are extremely grateful to Jeremy for taking up the challenge in aid of React and hope the soreness has worn off those muscles!

A 200 mile cycle ride is something most of us would never dream of doing, however one adventurous React supporter did, fearlessly completing the arduous track, cycling from



Jeremy

Star Students

We would like to say a huge thank you to all star students who have supported React this year, as they generously help to provide life-limited children with vital equipment through various fundraising activities and donations.

Students at Riverside Primary school chose to support React with a scrumptious bake sale and raised a fabulous £147.72 selling yummy cakes and treats, and Dragon school raised £1,000 through their Christmas charity sale, transforming their school with over 60 stalls and an auction room, for their chosen charities.

We would like to express our gratitude and congratulations to Shannon and her classmates from Richmond Park Academy secondary school for their well-researched presentation and delivery of React's work, which won over a panel, securing a grant of £1,000 for a truly wonderful achievement.

Not forgetting university students who have also worked hard this year with their fundraising triumphs. Durham University (DUCK) kindly donated a generous sum of £803 and Roehampton RAG chose React as one of their charities, raising a whopping £3,401.12.

All students deserve a gold star for all their fundraising initiatives and we are truly grateful for their support.

Trumpeters 'Golden Masquerade Ball'

On Saturday 18th June, Baroness van Dedem hosted React's 'Golden Masquerade Ball', welcoming over 200 colourfully masked guests to her home, Trumpeters house.

Guests were wined and dined throughout the extravagant and glamorous evening. Following a moving speech from Sister Frances Dominica OBE, Richard Clifford and Greg Wise staged the entertainment including an enjoyable game of heads and tails followed by a dazzling masquerade mask competition. The Mini Big Band brought the evening to a close and had guests dancing into the small hours.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all those who supported the evening so generously, and made it so successful.



Trumpeters

Holly's Holiday

Eight year old Holly loves to play outdoors and just like any girl her age, enjoys dancing and dressing up. Her beaming smile never seems to leave her face. Looking at Holly, it is hard to tell of the health scares and complications she has endured in her short life, but it has certainly not dampened her bright personality.



Holly

Holly was eight months old when she developed problems with recurrent chest infections, bronchitis and breathing difficulties. Her parents Alison and David were constantly in and out of doctors' appointments, but her health continued to deteriorate. Holly was admitted to intensive care, with a ventilator to assist with her breathing and her second Christmas was spent on a hospital ward. Holly was fitted with a tracheostomy to assist her airways and enable her to breathe.

Although Holly now copes with her respiratory difficulties, she is dependent on various medical equipment, including feeding and suction machines and numerous medications. Frequent hospital appointments, consultations, and inpatient stays are also inevitable, which can prove hard for Alison and David, Holly's two brothers Ben and Nicholas and Holly herself to take a break from the complexities and routines of Holly's health needs.

Alison and David searched for an opportunity to give their family a well-deserved holiday away, but purse strings were tight. It was then Alison discovered React. "I was handed a newsletter at a charity meeting I attended, and I noticed React offered mobile holiday homes. I thought there was no harm in putting in an application and in no time we were told it had been successful. It was nice to get away without worrying where we would stay and we were able to spend time as a family. Holly loved the swimming pool and evening club and we loved visiting the pleasure beach and going on all the rides" said Alison. The week away has given the family a breath of fresh air away from their normal routines and hospital appointments, enabling them to spend quality time as a family and relax in React's 'home away from home'.

****For more information on React's mobile home holidays, visit reactcharity.org**

Safe Travels For Emmanuel

Caring for a child with complex needs can have a considerable impact on any family. Specialist equipment can be expensive, and many are unable to afford such costly items. This was the case for Emmanuel and his family.

Doctors have not been able to conclude a full diagnosis for eleven year old Emmanuel. He suffers seizures, uses a wheelchair and requires 24 hour care. He has little to no head control and is unable to communicate, but he enjoys listening to music, and being read to by his loving family.

Emmanuel attends numerous hospital and physiotherapy appointments each month and a specialist car seat is vital, to ensure he is safely supported. Unfortunately, Emmanuel had outgrown his car seat, and it was becoming increasingly difficult to transport him. "He could not sit for longer than 2-3 minutes without becoming very uncomfortable and distressed" said his Mum. "He would start crying immediately and it was very difficult to take him anywhere".

Knowing this was not a safe option for their son to travel, his parents approached Emmanuel's Physiotherapist who recommended an application to React.



Emmanuel



Amelia

Family Time With Amelia

Three year old Amelia lives with her mum Jody and older sister, eight year old Miley. Amelia is very small for her age and lives with a rare condition called Cartilage Hair Hypoplasia. She has also been diagnosed with T-Cell Immunodeficiency and Hirschsprungs Disease. Her diagnosis means she has limited bone growth and is susceptible to infections. Despite her limitations, Amelia is a loving little girl, obsessed with dancing and playing with her older sister.

Amelia has had a difficult start in life and although Jody was aware during her pregnancy that Amelia's bones were not growing at a normal rate, there were no indications that her daughter would have any health complications. It was only when Amelia was born, the doctors noticed something was very wrong. Amelia was moved to an intensive care unit, where she spent the first four weeks of her life receiving treatment to prevent infection.

Over the course of Amelia's life she has had to live with a colostomy bag, feeding tube and antibiotics. She frequently attends hospital for fortnightly check-ups to assess her immune system. Jody was told Amelia needed a stem cell transplant, and at the beginning of the year, a transplant was arranged.

Although Amelia and her family are from Cardiff, the transplant took place in Newcastle, and Amelia was hospitalised for months. Jody was left with no option but to leave Miley with her grandparents and stay in hospital with Amelia in Newcastle. "I was up there by myself, looking after Amelia and so far away from the support of family and friends. Amelia had difficulties during her treatment and her kidneys would keep

failing so it was a very scary time. Over the course of those four months, I only saw my eldest daughter three times because it was too far to travel and our finances were stretched."

Jody was introduced to React by the hospital Social Worker, who helped her to apply. "The help with travel supported us so much, we were able to bring up my Mum and Dad, and Miley to visit Amelia in hospital and spend some quality time together as a family. It was a confidence boost for us all" React can help in a very small way which makes such a big difference.

Your Gift Is Urgently Needed

React aims to give children with life-limiting illnesses the best quality of life possible in the short time they have left. Whatever you can give will make a difference to a family struggling to give their child the best they can. **Thank you.**

YOUR DETAILS

Please complete your name and address details below so that we can reclaim the tax on your donation (see below) and also to keep you in touch with our work.

Your title and full name

Address

Postcode

Email

Signature

Date

YOUR GIFT TO REACT

Please accept my gift of

☐ £250 ☐ £100 ☐ £50 ☐ £25 ☐ £10 Other £

I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to React OR please debit my MasterCard/VISA/CAF Card/Debit Card (delete as appropriate)

Card number

(Security Number)

Start date ____ / ____ / ____ Expiry date ____ / ____ / ____ Issue no. (if present)

Signature

Date

If you would prefer to transfer directly to the charity bank account, please use the following details: Account Name: React, Account No: 00886556, Sort Code: 20-72-17

REMEMBER TO GIFT AID YOUR DONATION! (SEE BELOW)

MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE WITH REGULAR GIFT!

If you would like to give regularly to React, why not set up a standing order? It helps enormously to be able to count on regular income and also reduces costs.

Please pay REACT £ _____ each month/year (delete as appropriate)

Starting on _____ (please make this date one month from now) until

further notice and debit my account number

Bank sort code

Name of account holder

Signature

To the Manager (bank name and address)

Postcode

Please pay REACT Account No. 00886556; Barclays Bank, George Street, Richmond, TW9 1JU; Sort Code 20-72-17

REMEMBER TO GIFT AID YOUR DONATION! (SEE BELOW)

MAKE YOUR DONATION TAX-FREE

☐ I would like React to Gift Aid this donation and all donations I have made in the past four years. I am a UK tax payer and will tell you of any changes in my tax status or address. *giftaid it*

The Inland Revenue have asked us to remind you if you pay less Income Tax/ or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all your donations in that tax year, it is your responsibility to pay any difference.

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM TO THE ADDRESS OPPOSITE.

Latest News

JustTextGiving™ by **vodafone**

You can donate by Text too! You can now donate between £1 - £10 by texting REAC12 and the amount to 70070. It takes just a few seconds to help so many families.

White Cloud Capital

A huge thank you to White Cloud Capital for supporting React so generously. Through donations, events and auction participation, the company has made a big difference to React families.

Lord Austin Trust

We would like to thank the Lord Austin Trust for supporting families over the years, their most recent award will provide vital equipment to life-limited children in Birmingham.

Kew Fete Committee

The Kew Fete Committee has once again chosen to support React's work with a very kind donation of £1,000. We are extremely grateful to the Committee for their generosity.

Strand On The Green

Through various fundraising activities, Strand on the Green Association has raised a wonderful £620 for React families. We would like to thank all who got involved and worked hard to raise such a tremendous amount.

Community Foundation of Surrey

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude to the Community Foundation of Surrey for their award of £3,864, which provided vital equipment to life-limited children.

Featherstone Leigh

A very big thank you to Robert and Featherstone Leigh for understanding and supporting React's work over the years. Their generosity has truly made a huge difference to many children and families.

Richmond Fire Brigade

The Richmond Fire Brigade has gone beyond the line of duty, by hosting an open day earlier in the year with React as one of their chosen charities. We would like to thank the team for all their hard work during the day.

Wimbledon & District Synagogue

We would like to thank Wimbledon & District Synagogue for generously donating to React during their Kol Nidre Appeal. They raised a tremendous £9,722.21 which will provide vital equipment to React children.

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React provides urgent basic essential aid to families whose child has been diagnosed with a terminal or life-threatening illness. Any donation you make will be used to maintain or improve a child's quality of life in the weeks, months or years left ahead. Thank you.

