

React

GIVING DEPTH TO SHORT LIVES

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

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Comfort For Chelsea

development. It was not until she had reached her first birthday that her parents were given a diagnosis of four-limb Cerebral Palsy and Epilepsy. Chelsea would need constant medical assistance throughout her life.

Now a bubbly and beautiful five year old, Chelsea is reliant on medical equipment to breathe, feed and move each and every day. Mum Angela, Dad Matthew and their four children were struggling to live in a home that was too small, and this was compounded by the huge amount of equipment required to keep Chelsea as comfortable as possible. They had no choice but to sleep in the living room and made daily trips to their local hospice to wash and shower Chelsea.

Living in such a confined space was having a negative effect on the whole family and with Chelsea's health deteriorating daily, the stress her parents were under was enormous.

On hearing the welcome news that they were to be rehoused in an adapted property, complete with a hoist and downstairs facilities, the family were delighted.

However, just two weeks before their move-in date, Angela and Matthew were told they would have to source their own flooring for their new home, which currently consisted of bare, dusty concrete and detrimental to Chelsea's health. The family were once again plunged into despair. With nowhere else to turn and unable to purchase new flooring themselves, the family could not move in and were heartbroken.

After expressing concern to Chelsea's Social Worker, the family were referred to React who recognised the need to eliminate risks to Chelsea's health and safety. React was delighted to help Chelsea and her family move into their new home.

At just three days old, doctors discovered a bleed on baby Chelsea's brain but they could not predict what affect this would have on her



Support For Mohammed



Mohammed was born with Microcephaly, a condition which results in an underdeveloped brain. He has limited vision, impaired hearing and lives with Epilepsy, Global Developmental Delay and uncontrollable muscle spasms. Mohammed's tight muscles mean that he is unable to sit independently and he needs postural support at all times.

After surgery to re-align his hips, Mohammed could no longer sit in a chair due to the plaster cast which will stay on him for six months. His parents used pillows and bean bags as a compromise however, Farhat and Kasim were becoming increasingly concerned for his safety.

Desperate to find a safe and comfortable solution, Farhat and Kasim spoke to Mohammed's Occupational Therapist who recommended applying to React. In a matter of weeks, Mohammed's family were provided with a P-Pod, a seating system which is specifically designed for children with postural support needs. Mohammed is now able to relax safely.

"We were so shocked and surprised. This seat was so expensive yet crucial for Mohammed's comfort and safety. We're so happy Mohammed can finally relax", said Dad Kasim.

The future for two year old Mohammed is sadly uncertain. He lives with an exceptionally rare life-limiting condition and as any parent, Mum Farhat and Dad Kasim make sure their son receives the utmost care. When Mohammed required a costly specialist chair, his parents sought the help of React.

Can We Help?

Do you know a child who could benefit from React's help? For rapid, effective assistance our application form is available to download www.reactcharity.org or call **0208 940 2575** for friendly advice and support.

RAPID EFFECTIVE ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN WITH POTENTIALLY TERMINAL ILLNESS

The Giants Group Of London



On a sunny Sunday in July, the Giants Group of London completed a 5k or 10k charity walk around

Rickmansworth Aquadrome, to raise money for React children. Families and friends gathered to walk or run around the course, finishing at the Fairway Inn where everyone was able to tuck into a delicious brunch.

Following a successful golf day held at Aldenham Golf & Country Club, the Giants welcomed React to a cheque presentation dinner, presenting the sum of £3,000 to provide essential equipment to terminally ill children.

We would like to thank the Giant's president Kirti and all members of The Giants Group of London for their generous support and hard work which led to two fabulous fundraising events.

Richmond Bridge Club's Café Bridge

Over 300 Bridge players were seen in Richmond high street on a sunny day in June, taking part in Richmond Bridge Club's second annual Café Bridge, the largest Bridge event in the UK.

React was honoured to be the benefitting charity which saw players competing at a variety of restaurants all hoping to win one of the superb prizes through the raffle, silent auction and desired bridge trophies.

The event raised an astounding £4,500 for React families and we would like to thank Marietta, Lee, Vivien and all the stewards and volunteers for organising such a fun-filled day. The funds raised will make a huge difference to many of React's deserving families.



Kew Sinfonia

Early this Summer, Kew Sinfonia held a concert to raise money for React. The programme included music by Mozart, Debussy and Bizet and featured soloist Domonkos Csabay and guest conductor Julian Jacobson.

React Chairman, Rupert Wiles, gave a moving speech about React's important work and thanks to Richard Dubeck the evening raised an amazing £811.67

Running For React

A sea of React t-shirts could be spotted in Central London on Sunday 9th July, as once again brave React runners' raced the British 10k.

Martyn and Kevin from Amdocs UK were among the fearless few and raised a whopping £1,130.53 between them, providing crucial aid and assistance to low income families caring for a terminally ill child.

We would like to thank all runners for their support and look forward to seeing you again next year!



Trumpeters Tea Party

React's Vice-Patron Baroness van Dedem kindly welcomed React families to her home for a delightful tea party where guests had the opportunity to get to know one another.

Although the weather was not on our side, it did not dampen spirits as everyone indulged in delicious tea and cakes and as the rain subsided, were able to stroll through the historical grounds of Trumpeters House.

We would like to thank Baroness van Dedem for her hospitality and React is also grateful to Kim, Sally and Judy for providing such yummy treats. Thanks also to Claire, Deborah and Penny for pouring the copious amounts of tea and coffee. Vivien and Bob did a great job in keeping the children entertained and we would also like to thank Trustees Richard and Mike for their support and Paul for taking such fabulous photos. A big thank you must also go to our lovely families for making the afternoon a success.

London To Brighton Cycle

On Sunday 17th September, a very courageous React supporter took on the tremendous challenge of cycling from London to Brighton, and in doing so raised an impressive sum for React children.

Equipped with his bright yellow React t-shirt, Alan stormed through the course and earned his well-deserved medal, whilst raising £375 for React families.

"There were quite a few times when my legs were aching and my mind was saying 'give up' but all I needed was a quick look down at the React t-shirt to remember the children React help and their families which gave me the strength to carry on."

Well done Alan on this incredible feat and thank you for your amazing support.



Hugh's New Car Seat

When Emma compared her two sons' patterns of behaviour as babies, she instinctively knew something wasn't quite right with her youngest child. With just 14 months between them, Emma noticed Hugh was not developing at the same rate as older brother Sean. Hugh was neither responsive nor holding eye contact and following a routine GP appointment, he was referred to a paediatrician.

The doctors were baffled and now aged seven, Hugh lives with an undiagnosed illness and is still undergoing genetic testing. He has low muscle tone, severe Developmental Delay and is fed via a gastrostomy tube. With a grey cloud hanging over Hugh's diagnosis and no prognosis for his condition, the family have found it incredibly difficult to access the support they need.

In 2012 the family were introduced to React by their Community Nurse and over the years React has supported Hugh and his family, providing various equipment and breaks away at React's holiday homes. Most recently, the family were in desperate need of a specialist car seat for Hugh, he had outgrown his old one and with the help of Hugh's Physiotherapist, React was able to assist the family once again, ensuring he is properly supported and safe during car journeys to the many hospital appointments he must attend.

Emma said: "React is always there to help us with Hugh. The charity has done so much for us and we're so thankful."

Through the help and generosity of React's valued supporters, families like Hugh's are able to access the assistance they need, whenever it is needed.



Hugh

Independence For Eleri



Eleri

Eleri is a budding journalist who loves all things to do with writing. She is a bright and lively teenager who is ambitious and goal orientated and won't let anything stop her including the debilitating illness she lives with.

At just eight months old, little Eleri, who previously had been a happy and healthy baby reaching her milestones, suddenly could no longer roll over or pull herself up. Expressing their concerns with their Health Visitor, Eleri's parents were persistent that something was not quite right and after a year of tests, Eleri aged 2 was diagnosed with the rare neuromuscular condition, Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 2, a progressive muscle wasting condition.

Eleri's strength is extremely poor, she is a wheelchair user and struggles to lift her arms. Daily tasks such as lifting a cup or feeding herself take a great amount of effort and she can grow tired very quickly.

Eleri was losing the independence to carry out everyday tasks and the family were recommended a specialist piece of equipment which can provide power assistance, allowing Eleri to lift her arms with ease. Although a ground-breaking invention, the Neater Arm Supports are very costly and unavailable through local authority funding. The family tried every avenue they could think of to obtain the specialist supports, with no luck. Discussing their options with Eleri's Healthcare Team, the family were referred to React.

"The application form was surprisingly simple. As Eleri is 14, we've spent most of her life applying for assistance and React is by far the simplest application process we have come across", said Keri, Eleri's Mum.

The family were finally given the good news that Eleri would receive the arm supports she needed. "I actually cried when we heard Eleri was getting the arm supports and Eleri let out a scream of delight. We're so happy to have been helped and the supports are a godsend. Eleri has gained some independence and can do many things she couldn't do before. It has made a world of difference."

"I cried when Joshua played with his new sensory toys for the first time. I've never seen him react like that towards any object before. He was so interactive with it, trying to kiss the fish in his bubble tube. It was a lovely family memory I will always cherish."

Joshua aged 18 months is a playful and social little boy who loves meeting children and although he is unable to walk or talk, he enjoys being in the company of others. Joshua lives with an undiagnosed illness and doctors are still trying to find a name for his condition.

Joshua's Mum Stacey, recognised early in his development that her son was different to other babies of the same age. At six months old, he was floppy, sleepy and constantly sick. Joshua was unable to grasp most toys and when his cousin of nearly the same age was pulling herself up and rolling over, Joshua was not.

Young Joshua is still undergoing tests to find the cause of his condition and has noticeable low muscle tone and Global Developmental Delay. He also has sensory issues and finds it difficult to gain stimulation so benefits from sensory toys and lights which can be an incredible learning tool and beneficial for children with developmental delay.

When introduced to the sensory room at his local hospital, Joshua was fascinated and Stacey wanted to recreate the experience at home. Introduced to React by Joshua's Palliative Care Nurse, an application was made and in no time, Joshua received his very own bubble tube and fibre optic lights which he enjoys playing with every single day.

Joshua's Sensory Toys



Joshua

Your Gift Is Urgently Needed

React is a unique charity responding to the needs of children in the UK who are living with potentially terminal illness. Our aim is to help families give their children the best quality of life possible in the short time they have left.

Whatever you can give will help. **Thank you.**

Please complete your name and address details below to enable us to reclaim the tax on your donation and keep you in touch with our work.

YOUR DETAILS

Your title and full name

Address

Postcode

Email

Date

☐ Please remove me from your database

YOUR GIFT TO REACT

Please accept my gift of

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

I enclose a cheque 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 see React's bank details below.

MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE WITH REGULAR GIFT!

By making a regular gift you will ensure more children live with comfort, dignity, and the opportunity to participate in life as fully as possible.

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

Bank Details

Please pay REACT Account Number: 00886556; Barclays Bank, George Street, Richmond, TW9 1JU; Sort Code 20-72-17

MAKE YOUR DONATION TAX-FREE

REMEMBER TO GIFT AID YOUR DONATION!

☐ 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.

The Inland Revenue has asked us to remind you if you pay less Income Tax/ or Capital Gains Tax than the amount 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.

giftaid it

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.

Currie Motors

A huge congratulations and thank you to Siobhan and Currie Motors for kindly securing a grant of £1,700 for the provision of specialist car seats for children with life-limiting illnesses. This will make a monumental difference to React children and we are extremely appreciative of this support.



MMA Cage Fighting

One brave fundraiser, Louise chose to support React families in the most spectacular of ways... by competing in MMA Cage Fighting! Whilst battling in the cage she set herself a target of raising an impressive £500. Thank you Louise!

Department Of Education

By popping a collection box near the staff coffee bar, The Department of Education has been hugely successful in collecting funds over the years. We would like to say a special thank you to Emma and Aileen for their continued support and employees for their love of coffee and contributions to the collection tin!

Fifty Things For 50

Graeme has reached a milestone birthday this year and has chosen to support React by doing Fifty novel things to celebrate! Graeme intends to take on fun and outrageous challenges such as shearing a sheep and abstaining from alcohol, all set by family and friends whilst raising money for React children. Thank you Graeme, for your bravery and we look forward to celebrating the next decade.

The React Christmas Party

It is sure to be a festive and fun-filled night at The Bank of England Sports Centre, on Saturday 25th November. A host of supporters will be attending The React Christmas Party, in aid of financially disadvantaged families caring for a child with a life-shortening illness.

Guests will be immersed into a winter wonderland, enjoy a three course dinner with entertainment and the evening will close with dancing to a live band.

We would like to thank all those who have supported the event through sponsorship, advertising and booking tickets. We look forward to welcoming you to an exciting evening!

React

Rapid Effective Assistance for Children with potentially Terminal illness

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