

Disabled teenager finds freedom thanks to generous charity donation



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A disabled teenager has found freedom thanks to a charity that awarded her a portable hoist.

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Cassie Twohigg, from Chalfont St Giles, suffers from Rett Syndrome, a rare neurological disorder that affects brain development.

Cassie, who will celebrate her 14th birthday soon, was diagnosed in 2007 at the age of two after the usual child development milestone indicators she should have been demonstrating stopped.

By the age of four, she had lost the ability to speak and walk.

In March this year, Cassie had spinal fusion surgery to help straighten her back, but she experienced complications and, once she was well enough to be moved, her mother and sister were unable to lift Cassie without help.

After making an application to children's charity React, the family received a portable hoist that allows Cassie to be transported outside the family home.

She has since enjoyed a holiday – the hoist allowed Cassie to go in the swimming pool – trips out and safe transport to and from hospital appointments.

Mum Tracie said: “The charity React is a godsend. As Cassie’s full time carer I cannot afford to hurt my back and a portable hoist is the only way we can safely transport Cassie out and about.

“React responded to our application in a matter of days, they are amazing.”

React spokesman Stephanie de Chalus said: “Most teenagers take everyday independence and freedom for granted and cannot imagine the physical confinements an illness can have.

“For Cassie, the reality of living with Rett Syndrome is a daily part of life for her and her family.”

React - Rapid Effective Assistance for Children with potentially Terminal Illness - aims to improve the quality of life for children with life-limiting illnesses who live in families experiencing financial hardship.

The charity works to give these children comfort, dignity and where possible, greater independence.

It provides a range of equipment, from specialist wheelchairs, beds, baths, and mobility aids, to essential everyday items like washing machines and tumble dryers.

React can also offer mobile home holidays in the UK and, sometimes, funeral and memorial expenses.

For more information, visit www.reactcharity.org and see if you can help and aid those in need.