



**Tree of Hope**

*Transforming the health of  
sick and disabled children*

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# TREE OF HOPE

# PARENTS CHARTER

## INTRODUCTION

Tree of Hope is a charity which works with parents to help raise money for your sick or disabled child. From the funds you raise we then pay suppliers for:

- Medical treatment, including operations or drug treatment
- A range of therapies for medical conditions
- Travel and accommodation for your child and family attending treatment or therapy far from home
- A range of different types of equipment to help your child manage or overcome his or her disability
- Modifications to your home or vehicle to make them easier for your child to use

Parents work with us to raise money from donors for Tree of Hope, which allocates it for your child's benefit. If any of the donations we receive are from taxpayers who are not closely related to the child we can normally claim the tax back from the Government (known as Gift Aid) and add it to your funds. Parents and grandparents cannot claim gift aid. Our Parent Pack explains more about gift aid.

Tree of Hope can only help children who live in the UK, although we can fund treatment anywhere in the world, if suitable for your child. If the treatment centre is a long way from your home, we can pay for travel and accommodation costs.

We also can't pay for anything available elsewhere, for example from the NHS or Social Services.

Tree of Hope is a charity which receives no funding from the Government. All money raised in your campaign will go to the funds of Tree of Hope, whose trustees will allocate 92.5% to be available to help fund treatment, therapy or equipment for your child. The other 7.5% and any funds which can't be used to help your child will be used for Tree of Hope's charitable activities, including its fundraising and core running costs.

This *Parents Charter* describes how Tree of Hope operates and the parts that the parents and the charity play in the process. The Trustees of Tree of Hope reserve the right to update the charter from time to time.

## HOW DO I START?

To start with, please contact us by email at [families@treeofhope.org.uk](mailto:families@treeofhope.org.uk) or by phone on 01892 535525. We will speak to you to find out more about your child and her or his condition. We can advise you on whether you are eligible to apply for Tree of Hope support.

We will ask you then to complete an **Application Form** giving us more information. We will also ask you to sign the Parent Declaration where you confirm the basis on which you select specific treatments, therapies or equipment and to get your child's doctor to complete a form confirming your child's illness or disability. Once we receive these forms we will be able to decide quickly whether Tree of Hope can support you, and will let you know as soon as possible.

Plenty of helpful information is also available from our website, [www.treeofhope.org.uk](http://www.treeofhope.org.uk).

## HOW DO I RAISE FUNDS VIA TREE OF HOPE?

There are lots of ways to raise funds and we will give you access to our family support service when you onboard. Our family support team also have many ideas and resources for helping you to maximise the effectiveness of your campaign and can support you with fundraising plans that can assist your fundraising journey. You will receive weekly fundraising advice emails with tips and advice to keep you fundraising ideas flowing. You will also receive our Parent Pack and our Social Media Guide which are both full of useful information to assist your fundraising. Please read everything to the fullest that you can as these will help you on your fundraising journey.

To stay within the charity commission guidelines that are obligated to follow, there is some wording that must be included whenever you use some text online or in print to ask for donations.

On a page where donations are requested, such as at the end of your Just Giving and Tree of Hope fundraising pages, the following wording must be included:

'7.5% of all donations to Tree of Hope in relation to this appeal will be allocated to the general charitable purposes of Tree of Hope to cover our core operating costs.

If we raise insufficient funds, or surplus funds, then the funds will be used, if appropriate, to fund support for our child's needs in accordance with Tree of Hope's charitable objects. If in those circumstances we are unable to use all or part of the funds for the benefit of our child in accordance with Tree of Hope's charitable objectives, then any funds that cannot be used will be transferred to be used for the general charitable purposes of Tree of Hope.'

## ALREADY CROWDFUNDING?

Fundraising with Tree of Hope is far more safe and secure than traditional crowdfunding sites. With these sites, you pay a small fee for a platform and are left to your own devices to raise the money with no additional support. Tree of Hope provide donor reassurance, increasing your fundraising opportunities and making sure the funds are safely held for your own piece of mind and managed on your behalf with your chosen suppliers, therapists and healthcare centres.

Should you wish to close down a crowdfunding page and transfer to a Tree of Hope account, any funds that you have already raised can be transferred to your account for a reduced contribution fee if no fundraising is occurring.

Scenario A – If a family are depositing funds from another fundraiser with Tree of Hope with the view to fundraising and making use of our fundraising service – no 2.5% fee to be applied on any sum they deposit and the usual 7.5% fee to be applied as normal going forward.

Scenario B – If a family are depositing funds from another fundraiser who are just spending down and won't be fundraising – a reduced 2.5% fee to applied to amount for the financial service and admin support they will receive on that sum.

If you have any questions surrounding this, do contact our family support team who will be happy to assist.

## Collecting donations online

Once you have completed our online application process, you will have your Tree of Hope fundraising page ready to use, having completed the setup of this via JustGiving. Your page will simply be uploaded to our website within 24 hours from JustGiving.

Tree of Hope doesn't have its own fundraising platform which is why we use JustGiving. Their website is very user friendly and is a widely recognised fundraising platform available to both UK and international fundraisers and donors. We ask that all fundraising pages set up in Tree of Hope's name be done so via JustGiving. If you set up a crowdfunding page on JustGiving that isn't linked to Tree of Hope, you will not be able to make use of the many fundraising benefits that come with partnering with Tree of Hope.

Unfortunately, we are unable to accept donations made using other fundraising platforms. When launching your fundraising campaign and you have your unique Tree of Hope page link, this will provide an option for supporters to donate and set up a fundraising page in support of your campaign. Your total on your page will be the central fundraising total, if you have various fundraising pages, so always use your Tree of Hope page where possible.

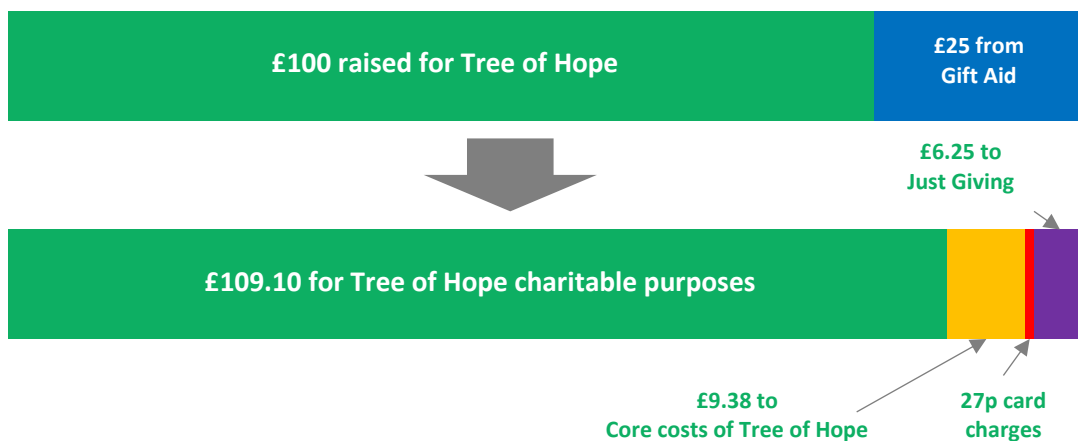
For any queries regarding your fundraising page, please contact [marketing@treeofhope.org.uk](mailto:marketing@treeofhope.org.uk)

## WHAT HAPPENS TO THE FUNDS I RAISE?

In order to benefit from the Government's Gift Aid scheme all donations have to be made to Tree of Hope either directly via offline methods such as BACS, cheque or cash or through your fundraising page, which is powered by JustGiving, our chosen fundraising platform. On request we will send you a statement showing how much has been raised, and how much has already been paid out for the benefit of your child.

Tree of Hope does not receive any funds from the Government or the NHS, but managing the funds for many hundreds of children does incur operational costs. Our core operating costs are funded partly from fundraising we conduct for the charity as a whole and from donations by corporate organisations and trusts. However, this is not enough to meet the full cost which is why we allocate 7.5% of the funds you raise to our core running costs. This is less than many other charities retain and it is essential to ensure the future sustainability of Tree of Hope.

So here is a typical example:



If you collect £100 and it is eligible for Gift Aid, the taxman will add £25 in Gift Aid. If you collect the funds through JustGiving they will deduct 5% for their costs (£6.25) and if the donations are made by debit or credit card there is a handling charge (typically averaging 27p) made by the bank. Tree of Hope will allocate £9.38 for its core running costs, and credit the remaining £109.10 to the account that will benefit your child.

If you collect £100 which isn't eligible for Gift Aid and send it directly to us, we will deduct £7.50 for Tree of Hope's core costs and credit £92.50 to the account for your child.

As mentioned above, HMRC does not allow us to claim Gift Aid on donations from the close relatives of your child or from those who do not pay sufficient income tax.

## WHAT DO WE PAY FOR?

You can ask us to make payments to suppliers for the purposes we can support, up to the total amount credited to your campaign and not yet paid out.

Tree of Hope must use the funds raised in the ways laid out in the charity's objects which have been registered with the Charity Commission, the body that regulates charities. These objects are:

**The promotion and protection of good health and relief of sickness of sick and disabled children under the age of 18 years resident in the United Kingdom and Ireland in particular without limitation by providing and assisting in the provision of services and grants to enable them to obtain medical treatment, therapies and equipment which would not otherwise be available to them.**

The funds raised for your child's benefit under the Tree of Hope banner belong to the charity, but other than in exceptional circumstances (see the FAQ below) your child's campaign funds will be available as payments for treatment, therapy and equipment that will help your child, provided they fall within the Charity's objects and are acceptable in the Trustees' discretion. As well as the requirement to stay within the charity's objects, Tree of Hope has guidelines which we use to make sure funds are used fairly and sensibly.

Tree of Hope staff are not medical or therapy experts and we are not in a position to recommend treatment or therapy for your child. We can tell you about treatments or therapies that other children with similar conditions have been recommended, but the decision to use these is yours, in discussion with the child's medical and therapeutic specialists.

## WHAT ARE THE GUIDELINES?

Under our charitable objects we can only pay to improve the health or lives of sick and disabled children. The guidelines below set out the types of treatment, therapy, equipment and associated costs that can be met by Tree of Hope.

### What sorts of treatment or therapy can we pay for?

Provided we have received the completed Doctor's Confirmation Form and Parent Declaration before or at the time of application for a payment we can pay for:

- An initial assessment of your child's condition from a medical specialist.
- Hospital in- and out-patient treatment including surgery and fees from hospitals, doctors and other medical specialists.
- Medical therapists including physiotherapists, speech, hearing, behavioural and clinical therapists.
- Recreational therapists, including music, gym, rock-climbing, horse-riding and yoga therapists.
- Gym or pool membership for your child and a carer.
- Massage therapy.
- Travel for treatment or therapy outside your home area including flights, travel insurance, car hire or mileage in your own car, hotel accommodation and a daily living allowance relating to the period away from home, both in the UK and abroad for two adults and minor siblings. We will also provide this support if your child is having treatment on the NHS.

The following limitations apply:

- We will pay up to £500 for the initial assessment.
- We can reimburse for any costs when you are due to travel so you are able to book the most suitable travel and accommodation that suit your family's needs.
- We will pay £65 per day (UK) and £85 per day (abroad) per family towards your meals and other costs while you are away from home and your child is receiving treatment or therapy. (Increased February 2023 in response to cost-of-living increases). Daily Living Allowance is a contribution to living expenses incurred whilst away from home, including food costs and can be claimed separately from travel costs.
- We cannot pay for anything available to your child elsewhere, for example from the NHS or Social Services.

### What sort of equipment can we pay for?

We pay for:

- Equipment or toys specifically designed for a disabled person.
- Sensory items bought from a dedicated special needs supplier.
- Equipment commonly required for post-operation therapy, such as treadmills, ljoy equipment, trampolines and tricycles.
- Items that are not specifically designed for a disabled person such as iPads, where a doctor, therapist or teaching professional has confirmed in writing, that the item will benefit your child.
- We can't pay for anything available under the NHS or from Social Services.

## What else can we pay for?

We will pay for childcare for your disabled or ill child to allow you to have a break, or childcare for your other children to allow you to spend time with your disabled or ill child. We will pay for this up to 5 hours per week.

We will pay for adapting your house or car for the needs of your child.

In the case of a vehicle, down payments towards the cost of Motability Vehicle schemes are covered, as well as paying the full reasonable cost of a vehicle if required, suitable for carrying your child, or we will pay the cost of adapting an existing vehicle for their use.

We will pay reasonable costs of adapting your home or garden for the use of your child. This may include the installation of a hydrotherapy pool where a doctor or therapist confirmed in writing that it would benefit your child.

If there is anything else that a doctor has advised you that it will benefit your child, is not available elsewhere and falls within our charitable objects please contact us and we will consider whether we can help.

## What can't we pay for?

We can't pay for anything which is not medical treatment, therapies or equipment as that would fall outside our charitable objects. For that reason, we are not able to pay for holidays or decorative items involved in a home adaptation project.

## HOW DO I APPLY FOR PAYMENT TO A SUPPLIER?

When you have raised sufficient funds, the time will come when you wish to start making bookings or ordering products from suppliers. All payments are made by the Tree of Hope accounts team upon receipt of an invoice from the relevant supplier. So if, for example, you wish to secure a booking with The Footsteps Centre, the process is as follows:

- 1) Make your booking with The Footsteps Centre, informing them the payment will be coming from Tree of Hope.

2) Ask supplier to invoice Tree of Hope for payment. Invoices must contain your child's full name as the payment reference and our postal address: Town Square, Town Hall, Civic Way, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1AL

3) Once invoice is received, the accounts team will carry out a Supplier Registration Application with the supplier if they aren't already registered with us.

4) Once the supplier has satisfied the registration application, the invoice will be processed and paid within 14 working days. If there is an issue with the invoice, this may take longer but we will always act accordingly and aim to pay everything within reasonable expectation of the suppliers.

Supplier Registration Applications are used to satisfy our accounts team that the companies and organisations we are paying, are the institutions they say they are, to ensure your funds are safe and to avoid us being the victims of any fraud. They are also used to confirm a consultant/hospital carrying out an \*invasive treatment, a therapist, have the correct qualifications and that they have been DBS checked, to ensure the safety of your child is protected, especially when a therapist is working on a one-to-one basis with a child.

For equipment purchases that are one off items and at the decision of the accounts and family support team, we will not require any supporting documentation.

\*Invasive treatments include anything that involves breaking the skin.

## HOW DOES A CAMPAIGN END?

There is no time limit to your campaign, except that our charitable registration only allows us to support children up to their 18th birthday. If you have funds remaining in your campaign when your child turns 18, they can be used up until the age of 25, to support the transition from child to adulthood. When a young person reaches 25, any remaining funds become unrestricted funds of Tree of Hope to assist our services in helping other families their children.

If we receive no donations and make no payments for your campaign for 12 months, we will contact you to ask if you intend to continue with your fundraising. If we do not hear from you within a reasonable period that you do want to continue, we will close your campaign and transfer the funds to the unrestricted funds of the charity.

If for any reason the funds you have raised are no longer needed for the benefit of your child, we will close your campaign and transfer the funds to the unrestricted funds of the charity

Tree of Hope's unrestricted funds are used to run our office, our website and accounting systems, our fundraising activities and generally to support the charity's aim of helping the children and families we help.



## Closing a Fundraising Campaign

Closing a fundraising campaign if you decide you no longer wish to fundraise for your child, please let the family support team know by telephone or email. We will then ask you to close your JustGiving page, and your page will be removed from our website. We will then deactivate your child's campaign fund with the charity. If any further donations come into the charity after we close your child's campaign, these will automatically go into the Tree of Hope unrestricted fund. Unless instructed otherwise, we will retain your details, in case you wish to fundraise with Tree of Hope sometime in the future.

## PRIVACY OF YOUR INFORMATION

All personal data concerning you and your child is held by Tree of Hope in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

In order to run an effective fundraising campaign it is necessary that you allow some information about your child to be published on the internet and in other fundraising materials. We will always obtain your consent before using your information in this way. Typically the information used includes pictures of the child, his or her first name, and a description of his or her condition and the challenges that you and he or she face. If you are concerned about this we can offer advice as to how certain details can be withheld – for example by not showing or blurring a child's face in pictures or by using a substitute for the child's real first name.

In order to communicate over the provision of treatment or therapy or to supply equipment it may be necessary for us to pass your or your child's name, your contact details or details of your child's condition to providers such as doctors, hospitals or equipment suppliers. If these are outside the European Economic Area you should be aware they may be subject to different laws concerning the protection of personal data.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Can I ask for a payment to buy an adapted car to transport my child?** Yes. We can pay a supplier the full cost of a vehicle which is adapted to suit your child, we can pay a supplier to adapt an existing vehicle for that purpose or we can pay the down payment required to secure a vehicle via a Motability Vehicle scheme contract.

**Can I ask for a payment to cover travel and accommodation for my family?** Yes, if it is not possible for you to leave other family members at home when you travel to a treatment centre, we can make a payment to travel or accommodation suppliers to cover their costs. Any Daily Living Allowance costs with any extra family members will be inclusive within the daily rates and the days that you claim.

**Can I pay for travel and accommodation and claim them back from you?** Yes. Invoices are generally preferable, but we appreciate booking sites aren't supportive of this payment method. To complete any reimbursements, we will require a booking confirmation or invoice from the

supplier you are intending to visit. Please get in touch with the family support team to discuss anything.

**Can I ask for a payment for a family holiday?** Because of the restrictions of our charity registration we cannot pay for an entire holiday, though we may be able to help with additional costs caused by your child's condition. Please call us to discuss this.

**Does 'equipment' include toys?** Yes, if your doctor or therapist has recommended toys to help your child exercise or to improve your child's quality of life we can make a payment to help with the cost.

**Will Tree of Hope make appointments with specialists, surgeons or therapists?** No, you must do this yourselves. If we have approved payment for the treatment, please let your supplier/therapist know that you have an account with Tree of Hope who will be making payment and pass our contact details to them to get in touch with us so we can arrange payment procedures.

**If you turn down my request for a payment, can I appeal?** Yes, but the commonest reason for our not being able to make a payment is that the funds would not be used in a way that is consistent with our charitable purposes. Appeals are considered by our senior staff and trustees.

**What happens to the interest or investment returns on campaign funds held by Tree of Hope?** The interest and investment returns are used for running Tree of Hope and its services.

**Who runs Tree of Hope?** Tree of Hope is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered no 08184807, and a registered charity in England and Wales no 1149254 and in Scotland no SCO 42611. Its registered address is 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1AG

Our office is staffed by a small team of dedicated staff who answer the phones and emails, manage the finances, carry out our marketing activities and arrange fundraising and publicity. The charity is overseen by a CEO and a board of voluntary trustees who have charity and business experience.