



Tree of Hope

*Transforming the health of
sick and disabled children*

OCTOBER 2023
newsletter

Inside this issue

Give Lincoln Back his Firsts

Asher Meek

Designability's Wizzybug!

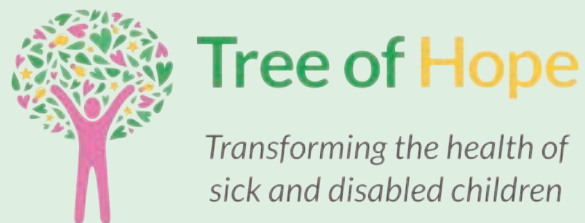
**Cerebral
Palsy
Awareness
Edition**



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

Tel: 01892 535525
www.treeofhope.org.uk

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After eight years at the helm of Tree of Hope I am now moving on and leaving the charity. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with all our many families, suppliers, donors and supporters and make a difference to the lives of children right across the UK. The impact we have made together on children's lives has been phenomenal and this will continue into the future assisted by the amazing team we have at Tree of Hope.

The staff team at Tree of Hope are a dedicated and committed group of people that have worked with me to make the charity the success it is today. We have together grown and developed the organisation, getting funding from many Trusts & Foundations to support our work and increase our numbers and working collaboratively with so many other charities to improve the help we give our families.

The Trustees are working on my replacement but rest assured you will be in great hands with the remaining team who are, as ever, available to help with your campaigns to make a life-changing difference to your children's lives.

Kind Regards,

Gill

Gill Gibb



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www.treeofhope.org.uk

HELLO



Well, Summer was a bit of a wash out wasn't it. We hope that this didn't dampen your spirits though and that you still managed to enjoy the break with your loved ones!

We're now looking ahead to Autumn, Winter, and dare I say it... Christmas! Traditionally, this is a very busy time of year for fundraising with lots of religious celebrations happening and challenge events taking place, so we've been busy behind the scenes helping our families and

general supporters with their fundraising.

We've loved seeing photos of you all in your all-new Tree of Hope T-Shirts and running vests, so if you have an event coming up, please do get in touch with us so that we can send you a fundraising pack to help get you in the mood for your event!

As ever, the Families team at Tree of Hope are here to help you with whatever stage of fundraising you are

at – whether you've only just picked up this newsletter and are interested in fundraising for your child's medical needs, if you're still on the fundraising journey, or if you're using up your child's funds, we are here to support you. Please feel free to pick up the phone to call us on 01892 535525 or email families@treeofhope.org.uk and we'll happily give you a hand with whatever you need!

Steph, Editor

PLEASE TAKE OUR SURVEY!

With the new school year having just started, we know that this time of year is like a mini new year to our families!

You may be looking ahead to the Autumn, when fundraising traditionally picks up with hundreds of fundraising events taking place across the country! Well we're also looking ahead, and we hope you'll be happy to help us by taking a little time to complete our survey, to give you a voice, and to help guide us on

improving our support services to ensure that you're getting the most out of your Tree of Hope fundraising journey.



FAMILIES



SUPPORTERS

We have a survey running for both our families, and our general supporters, so please scan the relevant code to you to be in with the chance of winning a prize! Up for grabs for our families is a £100 Amazon voucher, and for our general supporters, there is an exciting mystery prize on offer!

Please do help us out so that we can tailor our support to better suit you and your needs! We'd love to hear from you!

A NOTE FROM OUR TRUSTEES

The Board would like to take this opportunity to thank Gill for all she has done for Tree of Hope.

Gill has worked tirelessly for Tree of Hope and has led the charity through significant change during her eight years as CEO. Gill is widely respected in the sector both in Kent and nationally and this has allowed Tree of Hope to build its relationships with suppliers, donors and supporters. Importantly Gill has been a fantastic champion for families

and we know that many of you will be grateful for the support that she has given you and you will be sad to see her leave.

Gill's leadership has ensured that the team at Tree of Hope contributes to making a significant difference to the lives of many children and our drive as a Board is to make sure that continues. The Board is now focused on the next stage of Tree of Hope's journey and has started the recruitment process for a

new CEO. We know that the team will continue to support you during this time as well as continuing with Tree of Hope's relationships with supporters and donors.

It has been fantastic to work with Gill, we will miss working with her and we wish her all the best for her future.

Board of Trustees
Tree of Hope

CELEBRATING YOUR FUNDRAISERS

As you well know, we are all about fundraising over here, and we absolutely LOVE hearing about the fundraisers that you and your friends/family put on throughout the year. This has been an exceptional year for fundraising events and challenges, and so we just had to celebrate your achievements!

It's been a fantastic year of fundraising from our families and we've been truly impressed by the sheer amount of fundraising events and challenges over the course of the year. We have seen sponsored runs, quizzes, family fun days, skydives and even bushtucker trials all in the name of fundraising for a fantastic cause.

If you're currently thinking about fundraising for a child's

campaign or for Tree of Hope and you need a little bit of inspiration, then look no further, because this page is packed with ideas, which are tried and tested models, so take a look for yourself, and don't forget, if any of these ideas take your fancy and you need a helping hand in getting started, just drop us an email at families@treeofhope.org.uk or phone us on 01892 535525.

Shaun's Marathon Des Sables

Shaun Marshall took part in the Marathon des Sables, aka the toughest foot race on Earth. Held in the Sahara Desert, it is the distance of 6 regular marathons! Over the course of 7-days, Shaun ran 251km, all in aid of raising money for Freddie Hales! Shaun said that it was "an incredible experience. The Sahara was beautiful but brutal, surreal yet savage. I had to dig really deep, however my dark times are over from this race, and it's all in perspective when you think of the cause and the challenge I set myself".



**Raised
£1,540!**

Kaiden's Sponsored Walk

10-year-old Kaiden organised a pier to pier sponsored walk from Clacton to Walton and back again for Grace Beverton! Kaiden's teacher, Sally, is Grace's much-loved Aunty and they have previously raised money for her campaign at school, so Kaiden decided to take matters into his own hands! Lots of friends and family joined him for the full 14-miles and after battling through each and every mile, he completed the challenge,



**Raised
£872!**

Cricket for Tess

Tess's family organised a super successful T12 Cricket match for Tess at Chiswick Cricket Club with some star cricketers including Sam Robson and Steven Finn, a number of former professional cricketers and Harry Judd from Mcfly who is a keen cricketer! Mum, Cathy, said that the event "was a true family day, with lots to keep the children entertained, and it was gorgeous to watch them playing outside, well into the evening!" They had a raffle, food and drink, face painting and a chocolate tombola, to name a few! The event was a huge success!



**Raised
£11,113!**

Emmie's Summer Ball

On 16th June Emmie's family held a Summer Ball at Milsom Hotels & Restaurant Talbooth! The event included a three-course dinner, a DJ and a raffle! Emmie's mum Hannah said that "It was an evening in a beautiful location with beautiful people. Emmie had the best night and partied the night away, enjoying the disco, the singing, and the surprise birthday cake! Having seen Emmie's story on the local news Sue Tasker organised the event, and Hannah said that she has "given us hope that anything is possible and that we are not alone in this journey to provide Emmie with everything she needs to be her independent and cheeky self!" They already have a date in the diary for next year's ball!



**Raised
£7,000!**

Lincoln's Bucket Collection

On 20th August, Lincoln and his family headed to Morrisons for a bucket collection organised by his Beavers leader! They arrived at 11:30 and collected until 3pm and raised a brilliant £125, which was no mean feat considering the Women's World Cup Final was at exactly the same time! Mum Sarah said that "The Beavers have been brilliant with Lincoln's campaign, having also raised over £300 through a sponsored bounce and other kind donations!"



**Raised
£125!**

Emma's Skydive

Emma took her fundraising to new heights at the end of July by jumping out of a plane at 13,000 feet! Smashing her target and more, Emma raised a wonderful £570 for Grace and had an amazing time at the same time. She told us that "it was an absolute blast and I loved every minute of it! I'm so proud that I have done it and achieved my full amount that I wanted to raise, with a little extra too!"



**Raised
£570!**

Matthew and Lucy's Superhero Tri

Matthew and Lucy took part in the Superhero Series at Dorney Lake on Saturday 12th August to raise funds for their own campaign! Matthew took on the Superhero Tri, swimming 400m, cycling 10km and running 2.5km, and he didn't stop there as he also joined his twin sister Lucy in the Celebrity Superhero Relay, where he ran 1km in Sophie Christiansen's team and Lucy cycled 3km in Adam Hill's team! The Twins' family are so proud of them as they "never thought they would be able to do something like this, but the event gave us hope that one day, they will be able to do this on their own".



**Raised
£1,480!**

Winnie's Wellness

On 9th July, Winnie's family held a Wellbeing exercise day! The day consisted of exercise sessions, from Pilates, 80s aerobics and Bollywood dance. Winnie's family said that they had "an incredible day for our first official event for Wish for Winnie. We are thrilled with how the day went and we're so grateful to everyone who came, took part, helped and donated prizes".



**Raised
£1,216!**

There is nothing stopping you from joining this wonderful bunch of fundraisers too! If you're thinking of planning a fundraising event or challenge but don't know where to start, don't forget, you're never alone with your fundraising journey when you're with Tree of Hope. From behind the scenes, we've been proud to support these featured fundraising events/challenges, whether that's through providing a fundraising action plan and step-by-step guide, helping with PR and social media support, or sending marketing resources for the big day!

for Catherine, our PR lady to get in touch to put together a press release of your event or challenge, to help raise awareness in the local community.

Brand new for this year, we are able to send you a fundraising pack which includes a Tree of Hope running vest for those of you taking part in a physical activity! So, all you really need is an idea, and Katie, Caroline, Steph and Georgie in our Family Support team will help that plan come to fruition! You can call us on 01892 535525 or email us on families@treeofhope.org.uk to get started. We will take you through the process and help you along the way!

As always, we love to share about your events on Facebook too, both prior to and after the event, and we can organise



Effie in the garden!

Effie's Independence

On 6th October, we will be celebrating World Cerebral Palsy Day, a condition which 4-year-old Effie lives with. World Cerebral Palsy Day aims to ensure that all people living with the condition are given the same opportunities as anyone else in society, a mission that Effie's fundraising campaign mirrors, as her family are currently fundraising for an Innowalk, to give her the opportunities of exercise, movement and independence, which many able-bodied people take for granted. Read on to find out more about Effie's campaign and her recent Innowalk loan!

Four-year-old Effie lives with her mum, Ellena and their little pug, Milo in their home in the West Midlands. Describing her as a "very happy, cheeky and resilient little girl", Ellena beamed when talking about Effie's qualities and hobbies. Ellena said "she loves dressing up, singing, dancing and absolutely anything which involves her dolls. She loves being outside and listening to stories, but really, she's happy doing anything. She has an immense amount of determination, a love of learning and a drive for independence".

Effie's fighting spirit and cheery disposition continues to help her as she navigates the challenges that Cerebral Palsy can bring to her daily life. Ellena tells us that "Effie has Triplic Cerebral Palsy which affects

her lower limbs and upper left limb. She has little mobility, meaning that a lot of the time, I have to lift her up. As she doesn't have much confidence in doing so, Effie struggles to sit unaided, but she does have the ability to sit upright for a short time without help".

With Effie's zest for life, she simply wants to enjoy the same things that other 4-year-olds can do, so to help give her the independence that she craves, Ellena and her family aim to provide Effie with the tools, equipment and therapies that she needs to help her. With the help of her Wizzybug chair, Effie can enjoy some freedom and independence, and alongside her daily physio and various other therapies, she continues to make strides with her

overall development and progression. Indeed, it is thanks to the Wizzybug that Effie and her family came across other possibilities for her regular



Effie with her dolls!



Effie loving her Innowalk loan

therapies. Mum, Ellena told us that because Effie is an ambassador of Wizzybug, they wanted to attend the Kidz to Adultz exhibition to see the Designability team, and Effie "was an absolute star on their stand and definitely bought attention to the Wizzybug Team". However, a walk around the exhibition led them to checking out a potentially life-changing piece of equipment for Effie – the Innowalk. Ellena explained that whilst she "first saw the Innowalk on Instagram, we got to witness it first hand at the Kidz to Adultz exhibition with Made for Movement".

An Innowalk is a dynamic motorised 'cross trainer' style piece of equipment which allows people with limited ability the chance to stand and feel the motion of walking. The Innowalk is motor-assisted and offers adaptable support which is tailored to individual needs. For individuals who are often sedentary, it can be a fantastic piece of equipment to encourage movement in the body and offer an outlet for individuals to move and get stronger, when exercise may ordinarily be very difficult.

Knowing how much Effie "craves the movement" of exercising, Ellena knew that the Innowalk was the perfect piece of equipment for her, because "for Effie, it will help her massively as she doesn't ordinarily have the ability to exercise, and this will help do the exercise for her". Ellena went on to say that "it helps her put energy into something positive, rather than focusing on being frustrated at the things that she struggles to do".

After securing a loan of the Innowalk, it didn't take much persuasion for Ellena to realise that this was something that Effie needed permanently, as "within just three days, Effie's usual hyper extension of the knees had improved so much, and it also helped with alleviating her pain." Ellena went on to say that "Made for Movement don't suggest how long children use it for, and whilst Effie did get tired after 10 minutes of using it initially, she was able to walk 0.6km on her first go and loved the freedom of the movement."

Over the course of the two-week loan, Effie did over 28 miles of walking, which, not only was invaluable for gaining strength, but the upright motion really improved her digestion issues which she suffers from. Ellena explained that whilst the Innowalk is very expensive "the product completely sold itself", which was why she approached Tree of Hope to begin her fundraising journey.

Setting their fundraising goal at £35,000, Ellena explained that "it was daunting at first, but I think that the overwhelming thing is that people do want to help and have even offered to do their own fundraising. I was very out of my comfort zone, and I was wary to start fundraising, but I had no option, and friends and family have been brilliant".

We asked Ellena about some of the family's recent fundraisers, and she told us that, so far, "the only specific fundraiser that we've had is Effie's preschool's dance-a-thon which raised around £1,000, as well as our Thames Path Ultra Challenge where we walked a 100km route". Ellena and partner Ben took on this challenge on the hottest day of the year, on 9th September, and whilst they didn't quite manage the entire route, they gave it their all and managed to raise a wonderful £2,200!

Ellena went on to say "we have quite a few fundraisers coming up which we're

really excited for. My partner's mum is an award-winning cake designer, so she has offered to raffle a 3-tiered wedding cake for people near to Stratford. We also have our 'Stalls Lifestyle Charity Shopping Evening' on the 5th October which we're hoping will be our biggest success so far. The evening will cost £5 entry, we're going to have an auction and a raffle, and Stalls Lifestyle have offered 50% of all their profits on the night."

Explaining the perks of being with Tree of Hope throughout their fundraising journey, Ellena said that "whenever I've had questions, they have sorted things for me. We receive emails with fundraising ideas, which have been really helpful as people come to us wanting to help, but don't know what to do, so we can go back to them with some of the ideas that Tree of Hope have given us". Ellena also explained that the benefits of being with a registered charity have been very helpful "because we wouldn't be able to run a charity event or raffle as easily without having the charity status, as it wouldn't be as reassuring to the people attending, so just having that charity status available has helped."

For other families considering setting up their own fundraising campaign for their child's needs, Ellena said that "It is daunting, but it is worth it, and you will find that people really do want to help".

It's been our pleasure to help Effie and her family with their fundraising and we wish them all the luck with their upcoming events, so that Effie gets the opportunity to have her very own Innowalk.

You can make a donation here



See Effie's journey here:

www.treeofhope.org.uk/effies-independence/

Asher Meek

Smiley Asher!

Sometimes, life can throw unexpected curveballs, and you find yourself in a situation which you never pictured yourself to be in. This happened to Rachael and her son Asher who suffered a life-changing injury after an accident in the summer of 2022. However, Asher has shown an unwavering fighting spirit, leading to his family's sheer determination to provide him with the tools he needs to succeed in every aspect of his development. Read on to find out more

On the first day of the summer holidays in 2022 little Asher's life changed forever when he slipped into the garden unnoticed and fell into a full paddling pool which had been set up ready for some family fun time the next day.

Thankfully he was found in time and was airlifted to Bristol Children's Hospital where he remained in hospital for the next seven months. He is now back at home but due to the amount of time his brain was starved of oxygen he has been left with a hypoxic brain injury which means he is no longer able to walk, talk or eat. He also has severe dystonia which causes him the biggest issue. That said, his determined personality still shines through!

Mum Rachel commented "Asher is still very cheeky, he hasn't lost that at all. He very clearly lets us know what he wants and also what he doesn't like! He still loves his dinosaurs and cars and spending time with his brothers and cousins".

The biggest challenge Asher and his family face is that Asher is no longer able to do anything for himself. Rachel is determined to see him walk again one day and so set up a

fundraising campaign with Tree of Hope to allow him to access twice weekly hippotherapy sessions and other therapies to support him. Hippotherapy is the use of horse riding as a therapeutic or rehabilitative treatment, especially as a means of improving coordination, balance, and strength in those living with multiple sclerosis, brain and spinal cord injuries. Children with autism and other learning disabilities have also benefited from this form of therapy.

Asher now has a very busy timetable attending the Opportunity Centre two days a week and two hour physio sessions twice a week. The physio sessions provide a varied means of improving his core strength and consist of 20-30 minutes on the horse, 20-30 minutes rebounding on a trampoline and 60 minutes of more traditional floor physiotherapy. Rachel commented that "The physiotherapy sessions are making a huge difference. Asher has now started to roll over and his head strength is getting a lot better. He can now sit for up to 30 seconds at a time".

The fundraising campaign has been very successful and Rachel is bowled over at how the local community has got behind the family. "So many people have helped out, an

auction evening at a local pub raised about £2000 and we have a harvest festival event planned for October with all proceeds going towards Asher's campaign. Another friend organised a three legged race and my sister has set up a Facebook page called Asher's Raffles. Littledean School donated 10% of the profits from their school summer fair. You really don't know the support is there until you need it."

When asked what advice she would give to families needing to fundraise for a similar cause Rachel's reply was "Tree of Hope have been fantastic, we couldn't have asked for more from them. Everyone I have spoken to there has been incredibly helpful. Don't do it alone, make use of all the support Tree of Hope can offer and also put it out to your local community."

Tree of Hope are delighted to be able to support Asher and his mission to walk and wish him every success on his journey.

You can make a donation here!



See Asher's journey here:

www.treeofhope.org.uk/asher-meek/

TREE OF HOPE PRESENTS

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, SEVENOAKS

Thursday 14th December, 4 - 6pm

£12.00
per adult

£6.00
(16 years & under)

★ £30 Family Ticket
(2 adults, 2 children)



Tree of Hope

Transforming the health of sick and disabled children

TO BOOK YOUR TICKETS VISIT

WWW.TREEOFHOPE.ORG.UK/EVENT/CELEBRATION-OF-CHRISTMAS/



Meet Lincoln!

GIVE LINCOLN BACK HIS FIRSTS!

Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy (SDR) surgery is the only procedure which permanently reduces spasticity in the legs for children with Cerebral Palsy. During the procedure which cannot be reversed, nerves are divided, which can really improve quality of life and give children the opportunity to do things they never thought would be possible, such as taking independent steps. Lincoln and his family are currently fundraising for SDR and physiotherapy to give him back his firsts. Read on to find out more!

Aspiring games designer, Lincoln is eight years old and lives in Warwick with his family. Despite his mobility limitations caused by cerebral palsy he loves being active, and always participates where he can in sports. He's always been super water confident and is a very keen swimmer. He is a huge animal lover – currently he has a dog, a cat, two rabbits, fish and a snake and jokes that he could open a zoo one day!

Lincoln was born prematurely and required breathing intervention for his first 48 hours before being moved to the NICU in Coventry. Lincoln stayed there for two weeks before being transferred to Warwick again where his recovery continued. Mum, Sarah, said "we thought that the hardest part was over in the first couple of months, however when Lincoln started missing milestones like coordinated movements, coasting, sitting, crawling and balancing, we knew something

wasn't right". Lincoln received a diagnosis of scan negative cerebral palsy meaning cerebral palsy which does not show up on a brain scan. It has been a long road to diagnosis for Lincoln, and he has received test upon test to seek out the reason why he displays the way he does.

Due to his diagnosis, Lincoln does daily physiotherapy and uses various stretching and walking aids and a wheelchair to give him some independence when travelling longer distances. Over his eight short years he has endured countless day surgeries investigations, Botox injections and serial castings to endeavour to stretch muscles and help him as he grows. He is prescribed day and night-time ankle foot orthoses (AFO) and sleeping aids, to enable him to get the rest and recovery he needs.

It has taken the family nearly seven years to get to where they are today

in getting a diagnosis and treatment plan, which includes SDR surgery. Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy (SDR) is a surgical procedure that aims to reduce spasticity in the lower limbs. It is hoped that the SDR surgery will relieve some of the spasticity, stiffness and pain that Lincoln experiences on a day-to-day basis, and therefore it will free him up to be able to accomplish some of the things that he is currently unable to do for himself.

Looking to Lincoln's future, Sarah said that "we want to ensure that Lincoln lives a good quality of life, not only now in his youth, but also into his teenage years, and then into adult life. As parents our minds flash forward 20, 40, 60 years, and the period of time when we are potentially not around to help him. We need to give him the ability now to live pain free and avoid injury, as we all know as we get older aches and pains are inevitable, and we want to reduce Lincoln's aches

and pains which might well be greatly amplified by his condition. Mobility independence for life is our motto!"

The major challenges that the family and Lincoln experience on a daily basis are the expectations of what an able-bodied child of eight years old can do, versus what, in reality, Lincoln can do and what his carers can do in being able to assist him, because of the stiffness in his limbs.

Sarah commented that "it's rather a cliché to say that you get used to your version of normal, but it's true, and it isn't until you see him trying to play with other children, keep up without getting fatigued, not falling over and injuring himself, being able to do things around the home that other eight-year olds can do that you realise he is faced with a multitude of challenges. To Lincoln's credit he has always risen to the challenges ahead of him with grace, determination and nine times out of 10 a smile on his face."

Due to Lincoln's condition he also experiences sensitivity to various textures and fabrics and therefore picking clothing is a challenge. Putting him in his AFOs and finding shoes to fit that are comfortable without his feet getting blisters can also be very hard.

The family are currently focusing on fundraising

"One of the many things we have learned in this journey is that fundraising is all about community and communication."



26-mile Warrior Walk!

£22,000 for SDR surgery as Lincoln does not meet the strict criteria of NHS funded surgery. Family, friends and the community have all rallied round and the total currently stands at an impressive £17,500, raised in just four months.

Everyone from his local Beaver group to his parents' work colleagues have pitched in. Sarah commented "It all started in May when a family friend did an Ultramarathon raising a considerable amount for Lincoln's fundraising. Then

into the summer months we did a Castle-to-Castle 10K run, a team of warrior strong fitness members did a 26-mile overnight marathon, and Lincoln and his Beaver colony friends did a sponsored bounce and bucket collection at Morrisons in Leamington Spa. In the autumn, work colleagues are doing a step challenge, walking virtually through Europe, and a local cycle group are doing a sponsored bike ride. We are considering a fundraising non-uniform day at Lincoln's school and have also spoken to local officials about charity grants and what might be open to us. The



Lincoln during Physio

fundraising has been so much more than just about raising money – we've got back in touch with people who we haven't been in touch with for many years who will now be friends for life."

Sarah's advice to her fellow fundraisers is "don't feel daunted about the task in hand, use the wonderful team at the Tree of hope for initial ideas, ongoing support and fundraising collateral. One of the many things we have learned in this journey is that fundraising is all about community and communication. Through talking about Lincoln's fundraising, we have made new friends, reconnected with old friends, and utilised community groups we were already part of. Talk to clubs you are members of, talk to local community groups, utilise PR and social media. Push yourself out of your comfort zone – I found it very daunting being called by BBC Coventry and Warwickshire to appear on their drivetime radio show, but made myself say yes despite it not being something I would ordinarily do. Communication spreads the message. Community makes things happen!"

You can make a donation here



SCAN ME

See Lincoln's journey here:

www.treeofhope.org.uk/give-7-year-old-lincoln-back-firsts/

Fundraising News

Thank you!

Tonbridge Round Table have very generously donated **£2500** to Tree of Hope from their fundraising over the last year, including their Fireworks event in 2022. We were delighted to meet with Roger Barrow at our office, who presented us with a big cheque. Thank you to everyone at the Round Table, to all of the volunteers and to everyone who supports their events. Look out for our video being shown at the their Fireworks event in November 2023!

We continue be supported by **Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce** as part of their charity adoption in Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge. Recently we hosted an event at Tonbridge School with the Chamber, where we had the opportunity to present to the network about Tree of Hope and the work we carry out in the community. We also handed out some of our goodie bags.

We were delighted to have our very first **Friends of Tree of Hope** sign up – **Danny Littlechild** received his very own Oakley Bear. If you would like to follow in Dannys footsteps, you can find out more here www.treeofhope.org.uk/friends-of-tree-of-hope/

Radnor House, Sevenoaks have supported us for the last two years, and their adoption is now coming to a close. They have now raised over **£4500**, this doesn't include their big fundraiser *The Big Climb*, which we hope to hear about very soon!

We are delighted to announce that we will be working with **Holmewood House School** from September 2023 for two years, as they have chosen us to be their charity. We are looking forward to working with them and thank them for their support!

Skylark Golf Club – Men's Captain Charity Day **Steve Browning** the current men's captain hosted his Charity Golf Day on 13th September. It was an amazing event, and we were delighted to be able to attend before they tee'd off in the morning! Steve has so far raised over **£12,000** for us and still has 5 months of his captaincy to go. We are so grateful to Steve, the golfers, the team at Skylark and everyone who helped make the day really special.



Charity Golf Day at Westerham Golf Club

Our final Golf Day of the year was held at the stunning Westerham Golf Club on Tuesday 19th September! Our Teams enjoyed breakfast on arrival, 18 holes of golf and a two-course meal, before our winners presentations!

Congratulations to our Winning Team Pure Nails who scored 94, and our Individual Winner, Sunny Bodle, also from Team Pure Nails with a winning score of 42! Prizes were also presented to Jon Lovell for the Longest Drive and Neal 'Tiger' Turner for Nearest the Pin!

Thank you to all of our golfers for the support and generosity and of course to our sponsors Werry Consulting and Pure Nails. We raised just over **£4,000!**



Our Challengers!

Sponsored Swim!

Brothers **James, Will and Patrick** recently took part in a sponsored swim, each swimming 5k. They raised **£397** which is amazing – well done guys.

James said "we hope to have inspired some others to do something similar"we are certain you will guys, thank you!



Atticus' Charity Bike Ride!

11-Month-Old **Atticus** completed his 10 mile bike ride last Saturday raising money for Tree of Hope! Initially planned for July this year, due to bad weather, the bike ride was re-scheduled for 31st August, when Atticus was just a few days short of being 11-months, and he was the perfect passenger on the back of his Daddy's bike!

The cycle was arranged by our Trustee, Sean Thompson, and collectively they raised an amazing **£430**, way above their original target. Well done Atticus (and all the other amazing cyclists, including dad!)



Brighton Marathon – Sunday 7th April 2024

We have some places available for our general Tree of Hope supporters for the Brighton Marathon 2024, taking place on Sunday 7th April. These places have been purchased by us for anyone wishing to raise funds to support our work, specifically our Family Support Team.

If you are interested and would like to be considered for a place, please contact Karen Warner at challengeevents@treeofhope.org.uk



Save the date!

TN Charity Dog Walk

Sunday 8th October
Tonbridge Old Fire Station and Tonbridge Park
www.treeofhope.org.uk/event/tn-charity-dog-walk/

Carols at Christmas –
More info on page 9!



designability WIZZYBUG!

Finding the right equipment for your disabled child can be a challenge, particularly when most items come with a huge price tag, however, this isn't always the case, and we love to be the bearer of GOOD NEWS One of our wonderful Partner Organisations, Designability, have a loan scheme for their Wizzybug wheelchair, a wonderful, powered chair, for no cost at all – incredible right? Read on to find out more...

Established in 1968, Designability was set up after its founding inventor Bevan Horstmann saw first-hand the lack of mobility equipment available for his disabled daughter. Concentrating on where there is a lack of provision, Designability's main aim as a national charity is to help enable disabled people to live with greater independence and live the life that they choose.

Wizzybug is one of Designability's most popular items as it gives young children the opportunity to access the world, as they rightly deserve. Wizzybug, controlled by the child, moves at a walking pace, so children can keep up with their friends and family when out and about!

Tree of Hope recently met with Lucy Norris from Designability to learn more about Wizzybug and its loan scheme. Lucy told us that Wizzybug is usually "suitable from 14 months up until the age of 5, however this varies with each child depending on their size. We are not means tested, meaning it is free to any child who needs it".

One of the benefits to come out of Covid is that families can now self-refer

instead of needing to wait for a referral from a clinician, though Lucy explained that Wizzybug's criteria means that each child "needs good head and neck control, as well as a reasonable sitting ability. The child would need to be able to follow simple instructions, so that they can learn how to drive Wizzybug!" Lucy told us that "Wizzybug is also suitable for children who are able to take steps. Just because they have limited mobility does not mean they are not eligible for Wizzybug." In many cases, children can develop their mobility with the aid of a Wizzybug being on hand for those times where walking is tricky.

We asked Lucy about the process involved in loaning Wizzybug. She explained that it "starts with an online application form (details at the bottom of this page), and then a Designability clinician will be in touch to undertake a telephone assessment to fully understand the child's requirements".

The next steps include "arranging an in-person appointment in our clinic in Bath, the William Merrit Centre in Leeds, or the Mae Murray Centre in Northern Ireland. When the family attends the appointment, there will be a full seating assessment, and Wizzybug will be set up for the child, meaning they can leave with Wizzybug at that appointment!" The family are then given an initial end of loan date, taking into consideration as to how long the child would be able to fit comfortably in the chair, but Lucy explained that "Wizzybug grows with the child and families are shown how

to do this at their appointment. If the child can still fit safely in Wizzybug at the end of the loan period families can apply for an extension".

With every family situation taken into account, Lucy detailed their "access

fund, which allows families to apply for the costs of their accommodation and travel to the appointment", so that there are no financial barriers for any family.

When we asked about the lead time, Lucy explained that the

"waiting time is about 16 weeks from the initial application. We have about 250 Wizzybugs out on loan currently, and then at the end of the loan, they are returned to Designability, free of charge, and the powered chair is refurbished, ready for its next young driver!"

Lucy said that Designability "encourage families to look at their future mobility options well in advance of returning their Wizzybug". Tree of Hope would be delighted to help families who are moving on from their free Wizzybug, so if this is you and you have a piece of equipment in mind, please contact the families department on 01892 535525 or by emailing families@treeofhope.org.uk for advice on fundraising!

"We were prepared for it to take a long time for her to get the hang of driving the Wizzybug but within days of having it, she was wizzing around the garden like a pro!

Watching her and her big brother be able to ride together is the best feeling in the world."

Parent of Wizzybug user, Imogen

If you're interested in applying for a Wizzybug for your child, please visit this link: <https://bit.ly/ApplyForWizzybug13>

Or to get to know Wizzybug, visit here: <https://designability.org.uk/meet-wizzybug/>

Support Tree of Hope

Tree of Hope offers hope to seriously ill and disabled children living in the UK and their families by helping them to raise funds for vital operations that the NHS can't provide, therapies and treatments needed for rehabilitation and improvement, and specialist disability equipment and/or adaptations to a family home.

We need your support to make a difference!

You can help to improve the lives of children with complex disabilities and illnesses by making a regular donation or a one-off gift to Tree of Hope.

Your gift will enable Tree of Hope to:

- continue providing the legitimacy of belonging to a well-respected charity to hundreds of families, enabling them to access funds for their child that would not be possible otherwise
- offer online giving platforms for fundraising, making the fundraising journey far more simple for the family than it could be otherwise
- provide advice and guidance on the best ways of fundraising, and giving support throughout a family's fundraising campaign, including dealing with invoices and suppliers, and sharing news of other families in similar positions, reducing the stress for families in very difficult situations

- You can donate by cheque which needs to be made payable to 'Tree of Hope'. Cheques can be posted to our address: Tree of Hope, 61-63 Camden Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2QE

- You can donate by paying directly into our bank account, details below:

Tree of Hope
Metro Bank

Account Number: 21862665

Sort Code: 23-05-80

Payment Reference: TOHGDonation

- You can set up a standing order from your own bank account for a monthly donation using the above bank details
- You can donate online via www.treeofhope.org.uk using the Donate to Tree of Hope button. We use a platform called Go Cardless which pay us via direct debit. DD are used for either a monthly or one-off donations.
- To donate by text, text 'TOHDONATE' to 70085 with the number of how much you would like to donate between 1-20. The cost of a standard rate message plus the amount donated will be debited. All donations can be gift aided.
- You can set up a donation or a fundraiser via Facebook, please visit facebook.com/treeofhope.childrenscharity for details and set up.
- You can now donate by shopping on Amazon, Easyfundraising and selecting Tree of Hope on the list of available charities, this is a great way to support, just remember to click Tree of Hope every time you shop.

Remember to Gift Aid where applicable to add 25% to your donation at no extra cost. Please contact accountsreceivable@treeofhope.org.uk to obtain a gift aid declaration form.

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How we help...



Tree of Hope helps children and young people with a disability or illness by supporting their families to raise the funds that they need to pay for specialist care that is not available through the health care system.

Our staff team support Tree of Hope families by:

- Assisting with the creation of a Tree of Hope online fundraising campaign via Just Giving
- Making fundraising tools and advice available to parents
- Ensuring staff are available on the telephone
- Enabling each campaign to claim gift aid because it is part of registered charity Tree of Hope
- Putting families in touch with other families in similar situations for moral support
- Giving greater exposure to campaigns nationally through being associated with a well recognised charity brand
- Support with managing funds and paying invoices

www.treeofhope.org.uk
01892 535525

Who We Help...

- Children under the age of 18, with access to funds up to their 25th birthday
- Children anywhere within the UK
- A child suffering from a disability, illness or autism

Medical Conditions we have helped families with (not an exhaustive list)

Cerebral Palsy
Retts Syndrome
Downs syndrome
Global Developmental Delay
Hypermobility
Congenital Hypotonia
Epilepsy
Visual Impairments
Meningitis complications
Lebers Congenital Amaurosis
Dravet Syndrome
Hypoxic Ischemic Encephalopathy Injury
Dystonia

What you can fundraise for

Equipment including but not limited to trikes, hydrotherapy pools, specialist pushchairs & sensory equipment

Therapy, including; physiotherapy, horse riding & swimming lessons

Operations and treatment inside and outside of the UK

House Adaptations including sensory gardens and bathroom adaptations

Please remember to include all your fundraising needs at the start of your campaign. Speak to our Family Support Team on 01892 535525 for advice.



Tree of Hope

Transforming the health of sick and disabled children