

# inspire



Your supporter magazine



## Inside

- Strokes in children – Lily's story
- Q&A with Nicola, our lead IPC Nurse
- Capturing memories



**The Children's Trust**  
For children with brain injury

# Welcome



evolve everything we do to safely keep our vital services open.

Our specialist care, education and support is what The Children's Trust is best known for. But we also know that children are children, they love playing, laughing and having fun. And these are all great therapies too. As you will see in this issue of *inspire*, we have creatively adapted what we do so that children continue to focus on what they 'can do' and not what they can't. And, they always do it with a smile.

So how are things? With your continued support, things are going well. Children are making good progress, we're keeping everyone safe and there is still room for fun and laughter.

We continue to face challenges but we have exciting plans in place for our future too, which we share in this edition.

Thank you for your ongoing support and confidence in our services. I hope you enjoy reading how you're making a difference to young lives.

**Dalton Leong**  
Chief Executive

**I'm often asked by supporters how are things? The pandemic has affected everyone's lives, so it's touching that people are thinking of the children here and asking how we're managing.**

There was never any doubt that our work would continue, simply because it must. The children here have complex needs and rely on our support, often around the clock.

The challenges of COVID-19 are serious when caring for the most vulnerable children. The symptoms of coronavirus can be more severe in those recovering from life-threatening illness. Over the year, our watch-word has been safety. And we continue to adapt, change and

On our front cover is nine-year-old Shakeerah enjoying an arts and crafts session.

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REGULATOR**



TCT\_1011 March 2021

Registered charity number 288018

# We've been through so much together

## Our team pulled out all the stops

### Do you remember shortages of PPE?

We managed to secure PPE and supporters helped us out. We ended up spending £165,000 because it was vital to keep the children and our staff safe. When some children found the masks scary, we dressed up dolls and teddies in masks to make it feel 'normal'.



### We found creative solutions

When we couldn't hold face-to-face sessions, we went virtual. Technology helped us carry on with yoga sessions, occupational therapy sessions, classroom lessons and more.

### Staying in can be fun

Children couldn't go out on trips offsite and usual visitors couldn't come onsite. So staff did an amazing job, keeping activities fun and engaging, while enabling children to regain skills they've lost.



## We couldn't have done it without you!

### You 'visited'

Some of you joined a virtual tour around Tadworth. One supporter said: "It was really interesting, I hadn't realised the scale of the operation. It is really impressive! Looking forward to the opportunity to visit in person... eventually!" Like to join next time?

[tour@thechildrenstrust.org.uk](mailto:tour@thechildrenstrust.org.uk)

### You watched

We were proud to be featured on BBC Lifeline. Our appeal was aired on BBC1 in November and was presented by Martin Kemp. It was a brilliant opportunity to show what we do! And viewers raised a huge **£32,000** for our work.

Watch again [bbc.co.uk/programmes/p091jqd3](http://bbc.co.uk/programmes/p091jqd3)



### You got involved

An incredible **849** of you have taken on a virtual event or challenge to raise money including our virtual comedy evenings, 2.6 challenge and Step Forward. See our fundraising events calendar on page 9.

Over the last year, supporters like you have amazed us with your kindness, generosity and ingenuity. Your incredible efforts will continue to make our work for the children possible. **Thank you.**



## Nicola Rocca, Infection Prevention Control Nurse



Nicola explains her role, and how it's taken centre-stage during the pandemic.

### What is Infection Prevention Control (IPC)?

My role is about stopping the development or spread of infection at The Children's Trust.

### What sort of infections are we talking about?

Before COVID-19, my main concerns were usual childhood infections such as chickenpox, water-safety like the prevention of legionella, and stopping highly-contagious illnesses like norovirus.

### What do you do to stop infection?

It's not something you can do on your own. I write guidelines, set out procedures and train staff and volunteers in IPC. This can be quite basic such as washing hands and deep cleaning. But I cover subjects like antimicrobial resistance and the use of antibiotics too.



Indy is 10 and is a residential school pupil

### How has COVID-19 affected your job?

Massively. On top of our own safety guidelines, we have COVID-19 guidelines that are continuously being updated. Every aspect of what we do all over the UK, from therapy sessions at Tadworth to home visits by our community teams, had to be re-evaluated and revised to keep everyone safe.

### Can you give us a couple of examples of your response to COVID-19?

Sure, we immediately shielded residential children allowing them to stay in small bubbles with dedicated staff members, who are tested at least twice weekly for COVID-19. And when our charity shops re-opened I advised on the safe, social-distancing measures needed inside the stores.

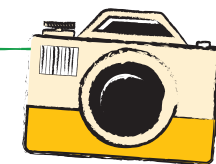
### What's been the toughest moment for you?

To reduce the risk of transmission we've had to limit visits to children living at Tadworth. Though parents can come if they test negative for COVID-19, sadly no siblings are allowed onsite. It's so hard to put rules in place that keep families apart.

### What's been the best moment in recent months?

When the sun came out last week, the children went out into the grounds in their bubbles. Watching out of my window, seeing them play and laugh, it almost felt like things were normal again.

## Shine a Light

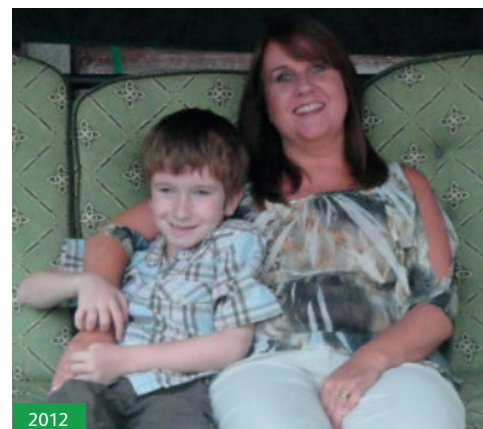


We are creating an online exhibition which shares the journeys of children and young people who we have helped.

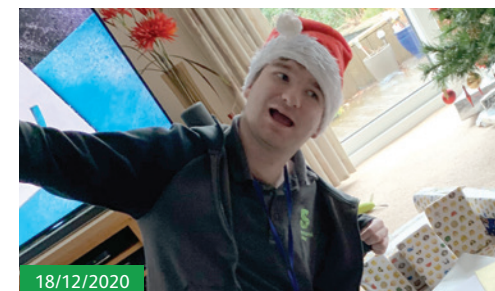
Brain injury and neurodisability affects every child in a different way. Each child is unique and so is their journey. Through the power of photography, our exhibition 'Shine a light' will highlight special moments in their lives, alongside a written account of their story.



We helped Paul with an intensive programme of therapies, and he went back to school.



Paul and his mum Karen, before Paul had a massive brain haemorrhage age eight.



Paul is more confident but his brain injury means he has to find new ways of doing things.

Keep an eye out for updates and sneak peaks of more children's journeys on our social channels

### Capture your own memories

All too often the photos we take stay on our phones. But you can bring your memories together or tell your own unique story, with easyPhotobook.

Create your beautiful A4 glossy perfect bound 30-50 page photo book for just £18.99 with NO postage to pay. Find out more and enter our donation code TCT50 when you visit: [easyphotobook.uk/TheChildrensTrust](https://easyphotobook.uk/TheChildrensTrust)



For every book made, The Children's Trust will receive 50% of the costs.

# Lily's story



"Lily said her hand felt weird. I told her it was probably pins and needles and if she just wiggled her fingers around it would go away," said Natalie. But Lily wasn't sure and she laid down to see if it would go away. But when she stood up, she collapsed down the right hand side of her body.

Natalie had no idea what was happening but immediately called 999. While she was waiting for the ambulance, Lily appeared very confused and could no longer talk. "I called 999 again and told them we couldn't wait", she said.

When they arrived at the hospital, doctors confirmed that Lily had suffered a stroke. But Natalie just couldn't believe it. "I assumed that

it just happened to older people. I was wrong," said Natalie.

Lockdown was tough for everyone. So imagine how hard it was for the family, with a very sick child in hospital. The restrictions meant that only one parent could be with Lily and they couldn't switch.

Bill, Lily's dad, had gone in the ambulance and was allowed to stay. Natalie said: "I couldn't see her at all. I desperately wanted to be there, it was the toughest time of our lives."

## Hope for recovery

After four weeks in hospital, Lily was referred to The Children's Trust for the specialist

rehabilitation to relearn the skills she had lost. Natalie told us, "we were all so excited and I was thankful that I could be part of her rehabilitation, as two parents could visit onsite."

At The Children's Trust we have strict procedures around COVID-19 and only essential visitors are allowed onsite, and so Alfie still wasn't able to visit his sister. And, at first, Lily felt a little apprehensive about it all too.

"Meeting lots of new people, including a new rehabilitation team, and moving into a new room was all a bit scary for her. But all the staff were amazing, and they really helped settle Lily and make her feel welcome," Natalie said.

Lily had a busy rehabilitation schedule with sessions from 9.30am until 4.00pm every day. These included Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy, school lessons and Play Therapy. We make rehabilitation part of a child's everyday routine, helping them to retrain paths in their brain, often through small, repetitive steps.

We know that therapy works best when it's fun so Lily learned lots of TikTok dances that included using her right arm and she made bracelets and slime using both hands. Lily's right arm grew much stronger and the team could barely keep up with her TikTok dances!

## Home at last

In July, Lily was able to ring the going home bell. "It was such a special day for us, and we are so proud of her," said Natalie.

## About strokes in children

Every year in the UK, over 400 children under 18 have a stroke. It can be associated with existing conditions like sickle cell disease. Or it could be due to trauma to the head or neck. But in around 10% of cases, there can be no apparent cause.

## Our specialist says...

### Mairi, one of our Specialist Occupational Therapists



"When Lily arrived at The Children's Trust, she had weakness down the right hand side of her body. Our team built a programme of coordinated support around Lily, and helped her work towards her goals – including improving the strength in her right arm, for activities such as dressing herself and being able to do arts and crafts.

By the end of her placement Lily not only regained the strength in her right arm, but her sense of fun and humour too. She was an absolute delight to work with."

Life is starting to feel normal again for the family. In September 2020 Lily went back to school, doing just two hours a day. She's also still doing her TikTok dances which she loves!

"I still feel anxious and think it will take time for us as a family to fully 'recover'. Going forward I would like to help raise awareness of childhood strokes and bring families together who have been through similar experiences." Natalie said.

Thank you for your kind support. You're helping us give children like Lily the opportunity to recover from brain injury and live the best life possible.





## What you've been up to

Our life-changing work at The Children's Trust is made possible thanks to the generosity and commitment of our amazing supporters. And you've kept your fundraising efforts going, despite the extra challenge of lockdowns.

### Get Active!

In February, many of you took part in our unique Get Active fundraiser. People were sponsored to do any kind of exercise – physical or mindful – every day for the whole month.

#### Some of the things you did

- Learn 1-20 in Mandarin
- Meditation – with pets!
- Just Dance sessions
- Dog walks
- Boxing



Our Chief Executive Dalton asked everyone at The Children's Trust to set him a total of 28 challenges, which ranged from skipping to drawing a self-portrait. Trickier tasks saw Dalton complete a 24-hour digital detox (no social media) and starting a staff meeting with a song!

A big thank you goes out to all our Get Active participants who have raised £6,104 so far, with more funds still coming in. So watch this space!

### Remembering Hannah

When their classmate Hannah sadly passed away, the children and teachers at East Sheen Primary School organised an In Memory Mini Marathon. We had cared for Hannah, so they raised funds for The Children's Trust. The school invited Hannah's family along, including cousins Tomi, Dani, Charlie, Lucy and Mike.



Fun and games in memory of Hannah

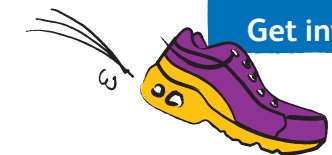
Each participant covered 2.6 miles each, and three children from each year took part in a relay race too – all following the government COVID-19 guidelines.

The event celebrated Hannah's life, with lots of pink balloons and all participants wearing pink too.

Charlotte Swift, teacher, said: "I was so pleased that Hannah's family came along and joined in the run, in memory of a very much loved and missed classmate and friend."

Thank you to everyone who took part and supported this event that raised an incredible £4,000!

## What's coming up?



As *inspire* goes to print, we hope that the lockdown will ease as planned. So you may like to take part in some of our exciting upcoming events.

### Parallel – Sunday 27 June 2021

A national celebration of disability including a virtual mass participation event and digital Festival of Inclusivity. Get ready to run, walk, wheel, push or be pushed! Parallel is an inspiring, fun day out and all ages and abilities are welcome to take part.



Parallel

### The Children's Trust Supercar Event Friday 23 and Saturday 24 July 2021 tbc

We are working hard to see this spectacular two-day experience return to the iconic Goodwood Motor Circuit in 2021! Please help us make it bigger and better than ever before by supporting this incredible event.



Supercar Event

### London Landmarks Half Marathon Sunday 1 August 2021

This is not your average half marathon! From cultural landmarks and heritage to the city's quirky and hidden secrets, runners get to explore the capital on a route like no other!

### The Virtual Virgin Money London Marathon Sunday 3 October 2021

This fun event is set to return this year. Participants can join the world's greatest marathon on the course of their choice from 00:00:00 to 23:59:59, wherever they are on the planet.

### Virgin Money London Marathon 2021 Sunday 3 October 2021 and Sunday 24 April 2022

The iconic London marathon is back! The Children's Trust have guaranteed places available on our team and we're giving a warm welcome to any runners successful in the ballot!



London Landmarks Half Marathon

### Royal Parks – Sunday 10 October 2021

This stunning half marathon takes in famous landmarks and four of London's Royal Parks.

More information on all our events and how you can get involved can be found here: [www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/events](http://www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/events)

## Exciting times ahead

We have made big changes over the last year to keep the vulnerable children in our care safe. But the pandemic hasn't stopped us planning ahead, and we launched our exciting new strategy 'Hope & Ambition' in April 2020.



Amara enjoying a yoga session

Our ambition is to support every child with brain injury and neurodisability and help them to live the best life possible. And our strategy is all about making that happen, with innovative new services, and even a new state of the art building.

Dalton Leong, our Chief Executive explains, "in five year's time, you will see five new innovative services in Tadworth, three new services across the country in our Brain Injury Community Service and we will have a new building on site offering integrated care. If that's not exciting, what is?"

This is the future your kind support will make possible. And so we'd like to share a little more detail about what you will help us to achieve for the children in the next few years.

### Building on our specialist knowledge to grow services and help more children

We want to offer flexible services for children

with acquired brain injury and neurodisability. For example, we aim to launch one new service a year for five years in order to help more children and young people.

### Support every child in the UK with an acquired brain injury

We want to scale up and broaden the support we offer so that it reaches all parts of the country. It includes helping parents know where to find help and advice, and sharing expertise with other professionals, such as teachers and clinicians, to support children with a brain injury.

### Improve outcomes for children with the integration of our specialist approaches

We plan to integrate education, healthcare and therapy across all our services and we are working towards a new building at Tadworth to enable this approach.

## Together we're making things happen

### Two new initiatives

With our supporters behind us, we're already putting our strategy into action. These are two initiatives that will help children and their parents, and the wider community to understand brain injury and find the right support.

### New campaign coming soon



We're planning to launch an awareness campaign about concussion.

Concussion is a minor brain injury that can still cause serious complications. Our campaign will help parents, grandparents, nursery leaders, school teachers, sports coaches and the wider community to understand concussion, see the potential risks and know the appropriate steps to take if they see symptoms.

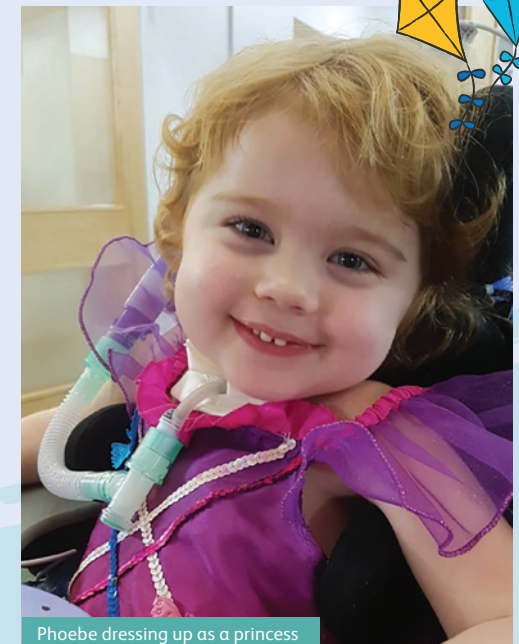
In the meantime, you can find out more about concussion at [thechildrenstrust.org.uk/concussion](https://thechildrenstrust.org.uk/concussion)

### Free training for primary schools

Did you know that, on average, one child in every classroom experiences a brain injury at some point during their childhood? Yet most teachers are not fully confident or aware of the signs of how a child may struggle at school after their brain injury.

We are offering free training to give teachers a better understanding of brain injury, and help them implement some of the skills from our training to help their pupils.

Do you work in a primary school and would like to sign up or find out more? Please email [getinvolved@thechildrenstrust.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@thechildrenstrust.org.uk)



Phoebe dressing up as a princess

Find out more about Hope & Ambition [thechildrenstrust.org.uk/about/strategy](https://thechildrenstrust.org.uk/about/strategy)





# With a gift in your Will you could help children in the future

## Every child deserves to live the best life possible

Our all-embracing specialist work just isn't possible without our kind supporters. One of the special ways some supporters choose to ensure our services continue into the future is to leave a gift in their Will.

We know friends and family come first, but could you consider a gift to help us too? A gift of any size would help our future plans enormously.

### Write or update your Will for free with a solicitor near you

In partnership with The National Free Wills Network, we can help you to write or update a simple Will or Mirror Will for free with a solicitor who is local to you.

To register your interest, please contact Charlotte. You'll receive a pack about the service and the participating firms in your area. There is no obligation to leave a gift to The Children's Trust but we hope you will consider doing so.

As we are covering the cost, the number of free Wills is limited and subject to availability.

#### Contact Charlotte

If you have any questions, please get in touch with Charlotte Chaplin on **01737 365 000** (extension 8082) or you can email [cchaplin@thechildrenstrust.org.uk](mailto:cchaplin@thechildrenstrust.org.uk)

