

inspire



Your supporter magazine

Summer 2025



Changing lives together

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

Welcome

Harvey



Thank you for your amazing support which makes the incredible stories in *inspire* possible. You can see the huge difference you're making in this edition.

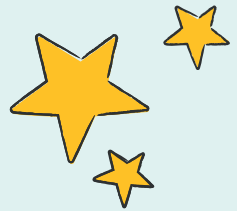
Supporters like you have had a huge impact on the life of Harvey. His story at The Children's Trust began as a toddler 14 years ago when he came to receive specialist care from our experts – and now he moves on to a bright and exciting future. We celebrated his achievements – learning to walk, communicate and be as independent as possible. He has settled really well at home and is enjoying his new school.

Harvey is popular and much-loved by everyone here. His story is testament to the specialist skills of our team, and also the warmth of our special community.

Today you're helping more children like Harvey live the best life possible. Your support makes you an important member of our dedicated team – because we're **changing lives together**.

Thank you,

Mike Thiedke,
Chief Executive



Meet the Team

Mariana Sotir, Housekeeping Lead

We care for some of the country's most vulnerable children and cleanliness is vital to keep children safe and to prevent infection. Mariana's hard work is plain to see – from the sparkling kitchens and communal areas to the spotless therapy rooms and children's bedrooms.

Mariana and her colleagues go the extra mile to create a welcoming environment too. When your world has been turned upside down, feeling 'at home' really helps. "I take care of the laundry for parents. It frees up time to spend with their child

and is one less thing they have to worry about," says Mariana.

Mariana has been working here for eight years and is constantly inspired. "Every day, I have the privilege of witnessing incredible journeys and seeing the progress young people make. Their resilience never ceases to amaze me," says Mariana.



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 thechildrenstrust.org.uk



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**“The work
carried out by
The Children’s Trust
is remarkable.”**

Shaheena,
Siddique’s mum

You’re a life-changer

**See the difference your support makes.
Families share what it means to have the
support of The Children’s Trust, after their
child has acquired a brain injury.**

You may remember reading about Siddique in this year’s Spring appeal. He experienced a brain injury after falling from a window. “I’d like every child to have the same specialist care and support we did, and for our experience to be matched, over and over again,” says Shaheena.

**“It’s a relief to know The Children’s Trust is
always there.”** Tricia, Orion’s mum

Orion, aged four, was supported by our Community Rehabilitation Team to cope with fatigue after childhood meningitis caused a brain injury. He was referred to our Community Rehabilitation Service.



Orion is making good progress

“There are so many unknowns with meningitis and acquired brain injuries long term. They were the first people who really sat us down and told us what the future could hold and how best to support an acquired brain injury,” says Tricia.

Isaac experienced a stroke which caused a brain injury. He came to The Children’s Trust for intensive rehabilitation.

**“The support from The Children’s Trust has
been life-changing.”** Nikki, Isaac’s mum

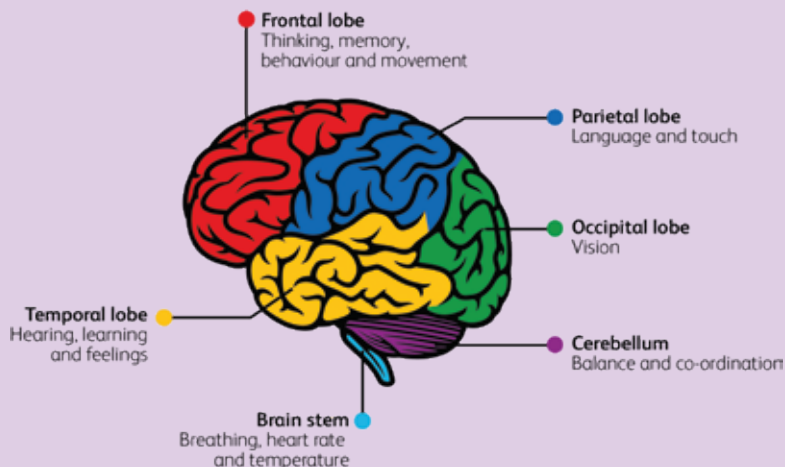
“The therapy teams are amazing, and the sessions are very individualised. It’s setting him up with some really good foundations and building blocks for him to keep working on,” says Nikki. Read Isaac’s story on page 5.



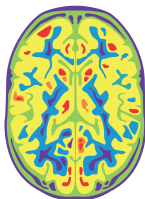
**Read more stories
about the impact you make–
thechildrenstrust.org.uk/real-stories**

Amazing brain

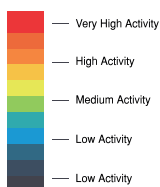
The brain is the most complex, mysterious part of our body. This small organ is nothing less than the engine room of our behaviour and the way we see the world. It makes up just 2 per cent of our body weight, but looks after a massive 98 per cent of our functions.



MRI



Neuroimaging



- **INPUT** – Gathers and processes information from all of our senses.
- **OUTPUT** – Sends out a lot of information, such as telling our limbs to move.
- **CONTROL** – Determines behaviour, speech, complex thought processes.

After a brain injury, children may face difficulties – from problems with memory, to long-term disabilities which have a lasting impact on the rest of their lives.

Helping them recover is rarely simple. It is why we are proud to be widely recognised as the UK's leading charity for children with brain injury and neurodisability.

Thank you. It's supporters like you who help fund our expert and specialist team. Please donate at thechildrenstrust.org.uk/donate-inspire

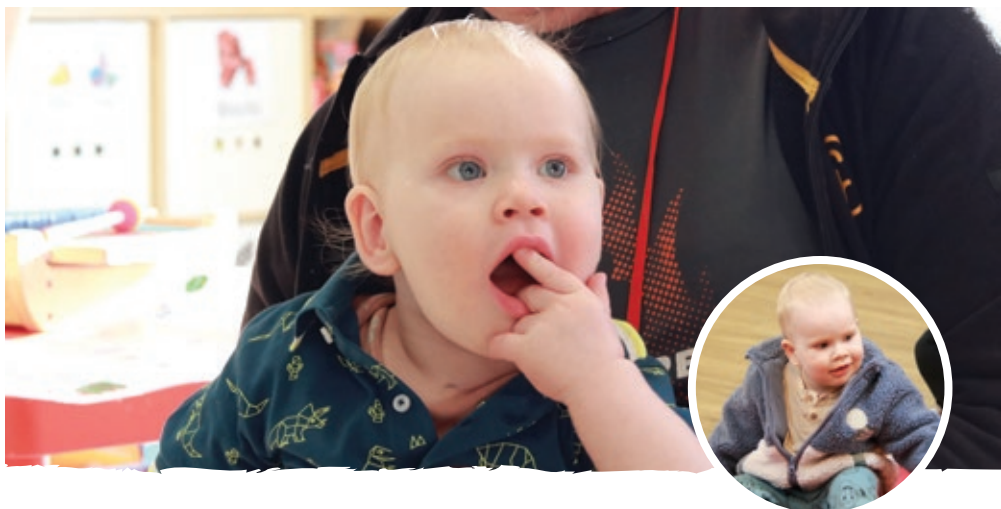


Brain facts: did you know?

Weights 2 per cent of our body weight

Uses 20 per cent of body's energy supply

Contains **100 billion** nerve cells



Isaac's story

Isaac, now aged 16 months, had a stroke and needed heart surgery after an infection spread into his bloodstream. He was so poorly, his parents were asked to call family to come and say goodbye.

Thankfully Isaac got through the critical hours after surgery. When he woke up, the effects of his brain injury became clear. He couldn't sit up, rollover and had difficulties eating. His parents Nikki and Richard didn't know what to expect.

After five weeks in hospital, the family came to The Children's Trust for an eight-week placement. In our specialist centre, they grew confident that our expertise could help Isaac's recovery.

"The therapy teams are amazing."

Isaac's rehabilitation included physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language therapy. Nikki saw how we worked hard to engage Isaac. She said: "With an older child you can say 'come on, you can try and pick that up, you can try and push that ball'. But with a 14-month-old you have to be more creative in getting him to engage those muscles and limbs".

"He's come a long, long way."

After eight weeks, Isaac was crawling around his room and playing with his toys. He was smiling, pointing, saying some words and eating food again. One highlight was when Isaac walked from the rehab centre to his room and most of the way back again, holding his parents' hands. Just weeks before, they never thought this would be possible.

What's next for Isaac?

Isaac will continue his therapy within his community, and his parents are hoping he will settle back into his nursery in the next month or so.

Thank you for helping
children like Isaac.
Read the whole story:
thechildrenstrust.org.uk/isaacs-story





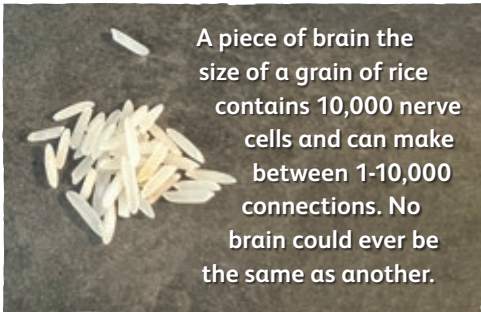
Mental health matters

Dr Jenny Jim is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist and also an Honorary Associate Professor at UCL. She is widely recognised as a leading professional in this field.

When a child has a brain injury, the physical effects may be clear to see – such as being unable to walk or talk, but a brain injury can also be life-changing in more invisible ways. The whole experience can significantly affect the mental and emotional wellbeing of the child and their family too.

Increased risk of mental health issues

Children may have been through a number of traumas, some of which may be ongoing. They may be coping with drastic and fundamental changes to their skills and abilities. They may miss their home life, and their siblings and friends. It may be hard to understand who they are now and their place in the world.



Families may have witnessed and/or experienced traumas and be deeply affected too. They may find it hard to cope and adjust to their new reality and feel a deep sense of loss for the child they knew before.

Our specialist service

Dr Jim and her team have developed a unique service at The Children's Trust. It combines specialist skills in neuropsychology, mental health and psychological rehabilitation.

"My team helps children and families to rebuild and adjust to life with a brain injury. We help them adapt across Social, Physical, Emotional, Cognitive and Spiritual areas, which we call SPECS", says Dr Jim. "It starts by recognising that everyone involved is on a very personal journey."

Every child is unique

At The Children's Trust we see many different causes of brain injury. Some children are referred to us after being involved in an accident. Their lives have changed in an instant and sometimes they're still in shock, struggling to understand what has happened.

“I didn’t understand what I was doing at The Children’s Trust, I had no clue what had happened or the damage that had been caused by the brain injury.”

Zac who was supported by The Children’s Trust after experiencing a brain injury aged 16.



Other children have been affected by a sudden disease like stroke or diagnosed with brain cancer and spent months in hospital undergoing surgery and harsh treatment, often causing life altering side effects. Families may ask ‘why us?’ They may fear ‘what’s next?’

The team starts by piecing together a picture of each child. What were they like pre-injury? What happened? How has this affected them in all areas of their life, and their family? They identify priorities with children and families. “From here, we build an individual rehabilitation plan for each child,” says Dr Jim.

They then may assess children’s neuropsychological skills – such as attention-span and working memory, to add to a holistic understanding of their needs and how to support their future progress.

“We take time to explain to families exactly what’s happened. We talk them through our understanding of the impact of the brain injury and how the brain has been affected,” says Dr Jim. Parents appreciate this one-to-one time with our experts in helping them understand what’s going on, and what to expect.

What is neuropsychology?

It’s the science of understanding the brain’s role in our sense of self, our behaviour, emotions and cognition.

Making a lasting impact

By taking the time to listen and by using their in-depth knowledge of the brain and behaviour, our specialist team helps equip children and families with the tools they need in their next steps. Our support helps make a significant difference to the wellbeing of these children and hopefully on their path through life.

Listening to families’ often traumatic stories is a humbling process and can be upsetting and painful for our therapists. As a charity we take care to look after the wellbeing of our teams too.

How you help Dr Jim’s work

It’s important that children get support with their psychological, emotional and mental health. Supporters like you help us do just that. You help fund services and programmes that help improve outcomes for children with brain injury, as well as supporting the relationship between parent and child.



Find out more
thechildrenstrust.org.uk/living-with-abi

Non-stop learning

Away from their therapy sessions and school lessons, children embraced new experiences over the Easter and summer breaks. As you can see, it was great fun!



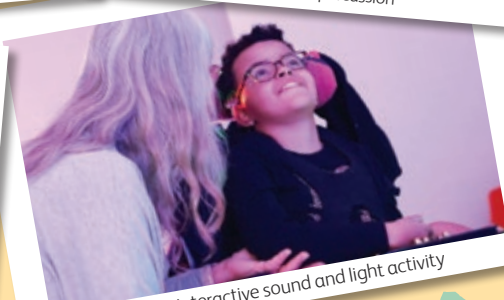
Valentina gets creative decorating her doughnut



Isaac enjoying some samba percussion



Seb shows his dish from the Sushi workshop



Keira enjoys the interactive sound and light activity



Indy prepares for our colourful Easter bonnet parade



Teddie takes part in a Panathlon challenge

Your donations help children enjoy all the fun of childhood. Please donate at thechildrenstrust.org.uk/donate-inspire

Supporter stories

We are so fortunate to have wonderful supporters who give to our vital work in all kinds of ways. Some of them make the 'gift of possible', by leaving a gift in their Will too.

We call legacies the 'gift of possible' because they help ensure we are here for future generations of children with brain injury. Below we share the stories of Roy and Jim, whose thoughtful gifts are helping to fund our expert services in rehabilitation, education, therapy and care.

Roy's story

The late Roy Came of Banstead never married and was a favourite uncle to his many nieces and nephews. Age 18, he did his National Service in Egypt before returning home to Banstead, where he lived until the age of 87.

Roy talked to his niece about leaving a gift in his Will. He wanted to help a local charity and children. She suggested The Children's Trust. She knew about our specialist work, as she had been a speech and language therapist for 20 years. We've put Roy's kind gift to work, to make a lasting impact for children, just as he wanted.



Roy Walter Came 1936-2024

Tax efficient giving

Lots of people worry about Inheritance Tax but the good news is that leaving a gift to charity in your Will can help reduce, or even remove, the tax burden on your estate.

For example, leaving a gift of 10% or more of the net estate value over the Inheritance Tax threshold to charity can reduce the rate payable on your estate from 40% to 36%.

To find out more speak to your legal or financial advisor.

Jim's story

Jim Bush spent most of his career in the financial world. When he retired, he jumped at the opportunity to volunteer at

The Children's Trust. He was touched by the stories of the children, and motivated to be part of a charity dedicated to supporting children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability.



Jim Bush 1925-2024

Over 25 years, Jim found new friendships and a renewed purpose in life. He only stepped down as his health made it impossible for him to travel to Tadworth. Some years ago, Jim told his son David that he intended to leave a legacy to The Children's Trust. That legacy has now contributed to a new vehicle. "Dad felt that it would be a useful legacy to leave," said David.

Please consider leaving a life-changing gift today



With a gift in your Will, you can give the 'gift of possible' and continue to help children and young people with brain injury live the best life possible. Find out more thechildrenstrust.org.uk/legacy



Samuel volunteers in one of our shops

“He’s quite shy so it has been great to see him interacting with his co-workers. Having to be more independent from us and work things out for himself more is building his confidence.”

Samuel’s mum,
Karen.

Vital volunteers

Samuel was diagnosed with a brain tumour at the age of four. After surgery, he developed Posterior Fossa Syndrome (PFS) and was unable to walk, talk, control his limbs, or sit up.

In 2016, a four-week rehabilitation placement at The Children’s Trust marked a crucial phase in his recovery. With our specialist support, he improved his mobility and strength, and his confidence too.

Fast forward to today and Samuel, now 14, is taking part in The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award. As part of this, he is volunteering in one of our shops, helping out with organising displays, pricing goods and stocking shelves.

For a large part of his life, everything has revolved around his treatment and recovery. Being a volunteer allows him to be part of something bigger. Working with others to make a positive impact really matters to him.



What Samuel has gained from volunteering

Helping out.

Developing new skills.

Building confidence.

Last year our charity shops raised much needed funds to support children with brain injury and neurodisability. Support your local store by donating items
thechildrenstrust.org.uk/shops



Join our volunteer team

We have lots of opportunities!

Find out more:

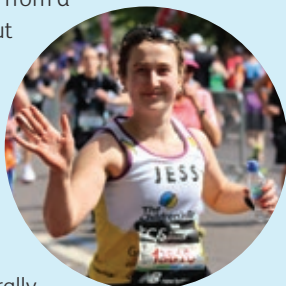
thechildrenstrust.org.uk/volunteering

Support our work

Every year, 40,000 children in the UK are left with a brain injury from an accident or illness. It can be life-changing, but supporters like you help us give them the chance to live the best life possible. Thank you for your amazing fundraising efforts!

London Marathon – you did it!

We're still buzzing from a fantastic effort put in by our squad of 55 runners. They showed huge grit and determination to complete this iconic challenge. Thank you for literally going the extra mile!



Celebrating 25 years of fundraising

In 2000, the Kingswood Supporter Group organised its first event: a Spring Fair at Kingswood Golf Club. Since then this dedicated team of supporters have raised over £300,000 for The Children's Trust.



Group members agree that as they live locally, passing the grounds every day reminds them that The Children's Trust is a special place and are proud to support our valuable work.

We were delighted to celebrate their amazing fundraising efforts in April at the 25th Anniversary Spring Lunch at Kingswood Golf Club.

Peak District challenge

Are you looking for a walking event this year? Why not join us in the scenic Peak District? With a range of distances from a 25K circular route or more challenging 50K, 75K, 100K or even a 100 mile race, there is something for all abilities and you can have fun while raising money for The Children's Trust.

And there's more...

We have a range of active challenges available so please email getinvolved@thechildrenstrust.org.uk to find out more.

Thank you for helping children like Ronan



Your donations make a difference

Please donate at thechildrenstrust.org.uk/donate-inspire

Support children like Teddie all year round

Make a regular gift

You can show your support all year round by giving monthly. You'll help us plan ahead and ensure we can support even more families who need our specialist support. It's easy to set up too.

Visit thechildrenstrust.org.uk/donate-inspire

Call 01737 364 349



Every pound makes a difference

Gift Aid makes gifts go further at no extra cost to you! Help us make the most of your donation by signing up to Gift Aid. Already made a donation? You can still Gift Aid your previous donations of up to four years ago.

Visit thechildrenstrust.org.uk/gift-aid

giftaid it



Scan the QR code to set up a regular gift

However you choose to give, your gifts matter.
Thank you



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