



The Sunshine Fund Christmas Appeal 2023

Freya Withers



Approximately **160,000** people in the UK have cerebral palsy.

1 in 400 children are affected by cerebral palsy, and **1,800** children are diagnosed with cerebral palsy every year in the UK.

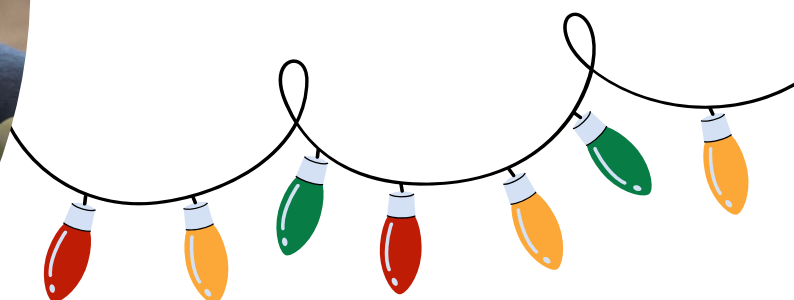


Meet 2-year-old Freya from Northumberland.

Freya has 4 limb cerebral palsy, epilepsy and chronic lung disease. According to Kathryn, Freya's mam, *"everyone who knows her, knows that Freya's special talent is hugs! Her cuddles can fix anything. She has a somewhat wicked sense of humour and her mischievous nature and infectious laugh brightens up any room. She's a bit of a dare devil – she loves music, dancing and being spun around"*.

She is fascinated by mirrors and loves seeing her own reflection and chatting to herself, she's captivated by lights, especially colourful ones and she adores swimming; water brings her a sense of freedom and weightlessness and splashing around clearly makes her day. All these simple pleasures bring her immense joy.

Until recently, Freya didn't have anywhere to sit comfortably both at home and when visiting friends and family, which meant she would have no option but to lie in her parents arms, in her pram or on the floor. This is where we were able to help... the family heard about The Sunshine Fund through Freya's OT, who encouraged the family to apply for a Stabulo Posture Cushion which is now an asset to the family's home.



The cushion allows Freya to sit and relax comfortably and safely, and it means she can sit with the rest of the family which encourages bonding time. The cushion is somewhat portable which means it can be taken to friends' and families' homes, and it can be molded into different positions which suits her physical needs so much more than other cushions. You can put a speaker underneath to create a unique sensory experience, which is something Freya loves.

One of Freya's greatest joys is being around her twin brother, Logan. She loves having him by her side and they have a special bond; he has a unique talent for making her laugh, and Freya lights up whenever he's near. As she grows bigger and as Logan becomes more independent, the need for Freya to have somewhere she can relax safely and comfortably became bigger, to have somewhere she can still have that special time with Logan.

As well as providing enrichment and having physical benefits for Freya, an added bonus is that Logan loves it too! He enjoys sliding down it and the pair can sit side by side, which means they can still have that quality time even though Logan is more mobile, and is often running around.



"It can be challenging at times watching as Logan leaves the room or the area Freya is in and she cannot independently follow. But the excitement she has when he comes back is unmistakable".

- Kathryn, Freya's Mam



Logan also has additional needs as he has short gut syndrome and is on a central line. He is non-verbal and communicates through signing, which he is amazing at. Having two children with very different physical needs has made it difficult for the family to find adequate housing, and they have had ongoing struggles to acquire funding to ensure the home is safe for both children as they grow up.



This is a reoccurring struggle for so many of our families, who often find themselves being faced with astronomical costs. It's said that families of children with complex needs can face additional costs of £260 per month, but this can be as high as £1000.

Things like ensuring there's space for a working chair or walker to move around comfortably in a hallway, or for a wall to be placed on the driveway to create a safety barrier for children in wheelchairs or who lack safety awareness; these are things so many of us take for granted, but are either not already existent in the majority of homes, or are things that the average family just can't afford to put in place, and often have to battle to get the funding.

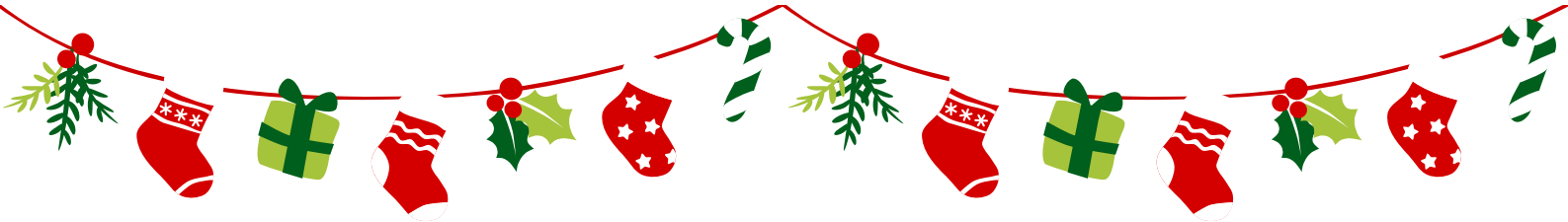
That's why we are so passionate about what we do. We understand how hard some families have to work to make sure their children's live comfortably and happily. This is why we make our application process as straightforward as we possibly can, so families can receive equipment that can change the lives of local babies, children and young adults in our region. Families can apply for 1 piece of equipment per child, every 12 months, and we are not means tested.

However, we can't do it alone...

With demand in equipment growing, we rely on the support of members of the public to help us sustain funding to keep our waiting times as short as we can. We have seen an increase of 43% in applications in the last 12 months, and with the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, we expect this demand to continue to grow.

With your support, we can clear each equipment round much quicker, and we can unite our Sunshine Children with the life-changing pieces of equipment they are so patiently, but desperately, waiting for faster. Children like Freya and Logan, whose worlds have been changed by one piece of equipment. The cushion cost £1,275, which is simply not within an average family's budget, but the impact it has had on Freya and her whole family is priceless.





How you can help... Your Gift to Us

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HSBC: The Chronicle
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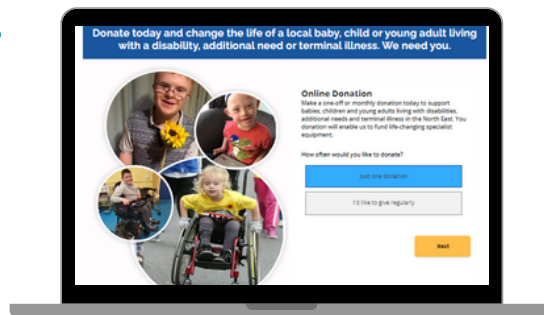


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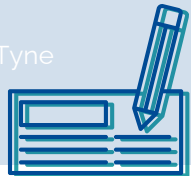


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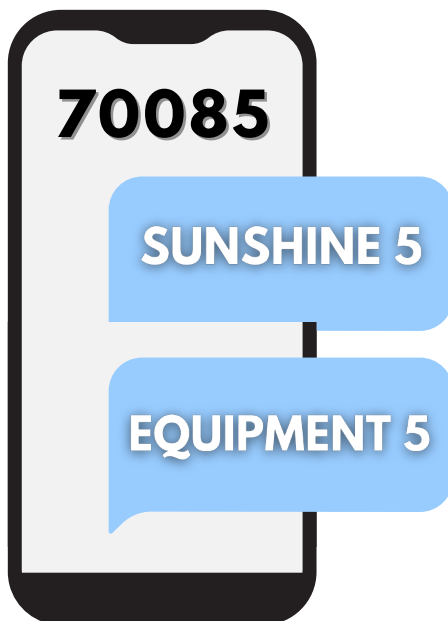


TEXT TO GIVE

Text **SUNSHINE 5** to **70085** to make a **one-off** donation of **£5**.

Text **EQUIPMENT 5** to **70085** to make a recurring **monthly** donation of **£5**.

Change the number from 2-20 to determine how much you donate.



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