

Newsletter

Winter 2013



Photo: Jessica Mann



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youtube.com/giveagiggle



www.theodora.org.uk

The difference we're making

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"I just wanted to say thank you to the Giggle Doctors who visited my 3 year old daughter today at Southampton General Hospital. She had just got back from her biopsy for a brain tumour which is inoperable. It was wonderful to see her laugh and a wonderful memory for us to have. Thank you Dr Dotty."
A parent.

"Thank you so much to Dr Mattie for brightening up a long day of waiting and dull appointments yesterday for my little man. We've been going to GOSH for 9 years now on a very regular basis, and this was our first encounter with the Giggle Doctors.... You are wonderfully amazing, thank you!"
A parent.

"You bring every child you meet special memories and a few moments of relief from the stress and worry they might be going through. You bring smiles, happiness and love to everyone you meet and we are blessed to have you share our lives"
Rosemarie Glithero, Leisure & Activity Coordinator,
The Children's Trust

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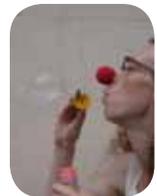
Photo : Mike Kear



Winter's fast approaching and we're getting in the festive spirit already. As it's a time of giving and helping others we thought we would say a big thank you to all the volunteers who have helped us so much this year. Whether it's getting their work places and universities involved, talking part in events or donning an elf costume at our grotto in December, they've made a huge difference.

It is this support and your donations that help to keep the children we visit smiling. The Giggle Doctors have been spreading joy to children in hospital all year but with Christmas around the corner we all have fun and laughter on the mind. Thanks to your donations, children like Thomas (see page 3) now see hospital in a different light; a place where fun can be had and magical memories made. We hope you enjoy reading about their experiences.

Please help us to keep these special moments going this Christmas. Will you give the gift of laughter this year? Find out how you can help on pages 6 and 7.



Thomas' Story

Sammy Clowes got in touch to tell us about the time her 7 year old son Thomas met Dr Faffy.

When did Thomas first become ill?

Thomas went on a nature walk with his school. When his teacher wasn't looking he picked a mushroom which unfortunately turned out to be toxic. At first his school thought his symptoms were the result of hay fever but knowing he doesn't suffer from it I was instantly concerned. We soon realised the toxins from the mushroom had been absorbed through the pores in his skin. His face had swollen to twice its normal size and his eyes had begun to close and go blood shot.

I took him straight to the A&E department of Glan Clwyd Hospital in Rhyl. On arrival we were seen by doctors who told Thomas that he would have to be admitted. Whilst we were waiting I saw two Giggle Doctors entertaining children and their families. They were laughing but I didn't pay much attention, I was too worried about Thomas and his condition.



When did Thomas first meet the Giggle Doctors?

Once settled on the children's ward Thomas had a series of blood tests to check whether the toxins had affected his organs.



He hates needles and was in floods of tears. Dr Faffy appeared on the ward at just that moment and began blowing bubbles and singing songs. She went around the room, entertaining each of the children there. Thomas and I had been in the hospital for 5 hours by that time but Dr Faffy soon made us forget why we were there. She didn't pass judgement or comment on how his face looked, she looked past all that, concentrating solely on cheering him up.

She sang funny songs and encouraged him to take part in magic. There was an aura about her in that single moment; she made all the day's events just fade away. Even the nurses got involved, singing along and bursting the bubbles that Dr Faffy had blown. In my eyes it made them seem human and 'nice' as Thomas put it; more than just someone in a blue or green uniform. Another hour passed and Dr Faffy was still going around the wards and the play room. She came back to Thomas and me to sing a song but first made him a balloon banjo. He played along with Dr Faffy with a huge Cheshire cat smile on his face. She gave him a certificate for being so brilliant.



How did Dr Faffy help?

There's a beautiful quote which I think sums up what the Giggle Doctors do for sick children and their parents. "When the world says 'give up', hope whispers, 'try one more time'". Hope is sometimes found in the smallest of things. One person saying 'hello' breaks down barriers and no matter how sick a child may be laughter helps the heart beat on and gives hope and comfort.

Dr Faffy touched our lives in one single moment with a smile and lots of bubbles. She made our stay on the ward easier and helped us to forget about why we were there. Even now, Thomas is still talking about his visit from the Giggle Doctor. He now believes magic is not just in Harry Potter movies...he has the wand to prove it.



Thomas still has his wand!

Spotlight on events

Chores for Chuckles 2013

In our last newsletter we launched our new event: **Chores for Chuckles**. Thank you so much to everyone who got involved. We were blown away by the support we received. Schools, businesses and individuals all rolled up their sleeves and got stuck into those jobs we all put off, to help raise money for a great cause. Your hard earned donations helped us to visit lots more children in hospital. Thank you so much.



Next year's week is scheduled for the **19th - 25th May** so please pop the date in your diary and start saving up the jobs. Who will you pick to do your dirty work?

Take on a challenge in 2014...



It's never too early to make your New Year's resolution! Make 2014 the year you **take on the challenge of a lifetime!** We are hoping to get people together for Kilimanjaro, Trekfest and London-Paris Bike Ride. In this newsletter we're going to look at our fantastic biking challenge:

The 265 mile, 4 day bike ride will both challenge you and take your breath away. Beginning in London, the challenge will culminate in Paris where you will cycle up the Champs Elysées, following in the tyre tracks of the cycling greats. The next day you can watch the current cycling legends cycle the same route in the finale of the Tour de France! A challenge that's definitely not to be missed.

For more information on our events please contact Jenny at theodora.uk@theodora.org

Give a Giggle: Make a donation

Thousands of children across the UK will spend the festive period in hospital this year. At Theodora Children's Trust, we believe all children should be able to enjoy their childhood, no matter how ill they are. Help us to bring smiles and laughter to children who need them most.

A gift of **£5** can send a Giggle Doctor to a child's bedside.

£10 can bring giggles and smiles to two children and their families.

£50 can bring sparkle and magic to light up a whole children's ward.

£207 can fund a Giggle Doctor visit to a ward for a whole afternoon.

To donate online by card please visit: www.theodora.org.uk

Or to donate by cheque please complete the form below:

Name: _____
 Address: _____

 Postcode: _____ Tel: _____
 Email: _____

Under the Data Protection Act, your details will be used only for administrative purposes and will not be sent to third parties.

Please make cheques payable to: Theodora Children's Trust

Please Gift Aid my donation. *giftaid it*

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for the current tax year that is at least equal to the amount of tax that Theodora Children's Trust will reclaim on my gifts for the current tax year. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I have given.

Please do not send me a receipt.

If you do not wish to receive our latest news, please tick this box.

**Please post completed forms to:
 Theodora Children's Trust, 40 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9HF**

Christmas cards

This year, when sending your Christmas cards why not *Give a Giggle* to a child in hospital at the same time.

We have 2 fantastic designs to choose from. Each card comes in a pack of 10 and includes the message "Wishing you a season full of fun and laughter" inside. Each pack is priced at £3.50.

If you would like to make an order, please order online at www.theodora.org.uk or call Jenny on 020 7713 0044 to order over the phone.



020 7713 0044



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