



Make Them Smile Children's Charity

Registered Charity No: 1150013

Registered with



Tel: 0330 1330 870

www.makethemsmile.org.uk

Issue 7

Update on Recent Support Initiatives: January - June 2025

With thanks to the generosity of our donors and supporters, we are proud to share an update on the impactful support initiatives we've delivered so far this year.

Touching the lives of hundreds of children and families in need, below is an example of how we have been able to provide hope, relief, and essential resources

Wheelchairs

As part of our ongoing efforts to support children with mobility challenges, we have proudly provided a total of 7 wheelchairs to those in need. This includes five powered wheelchairs, which offer greater independence and ease of movement for children with limited physical capabilities, as well as one standard manual wheelchair for daily use.

In addition, we have supplied one all-terrain wheelchair, specifically designed to navigate rough or uneven surfaces, ensuring that children can enjoy greater freedom and access to outdoor environments. Each of these wheelchairs represents a step toward improved quality of life, empowerment, and inclusion for the children and their families, and we remain committed to making mobility more accessible to all.



Hydrotherapy & Physiotherapy

We have delivered 64 hydrotherapy and physiotherapy sessions, providing vital therapeutic support to individuals with a range of physical needs. These sessions have played an important role in promoting mobility, reducing pain, and enhancing the overall quality of life for the children.



Hydrotherapy has been particularly beneficial for those with limited movement or chronic pain, offering a low-impact environment to safely build strength and flexibility. Physiotherapy sessions have supported clients in their recovery from injury, surgery, or long-term conditions, with tailored treatment plans designed to help them achieve their personal health goals.

The consistent delivery of these services reflects our commitment to holistic, client-centered care and the ongoing improvement of physical health and well-being in our community



Technology

We have invested in essential assistive technology to better support children with additional needs, ensuring they have access to tools that promote their development, inclusion, and quality of life. As part of this initiative, we provided 3 specialised communication devices to children facing significant speech and language challenges. These devices have empowered the children to express their thoughts, needs, and emotions more clearly, reducing frustration and enabling them to participate more fully in classroom activities, social interactions, and family life. For many, this has been a transformative step toward building confidence and developing stronger communication skills. We also supplied 2 tablets to children diagnosed with ADHD and Autism Spectrum Disorder. These tablets were equipped with carefully selected educational and therapeutic apps designed to enhance focus, emotional regulation, and learning engagement. For children with sensory sensitivities or difficulties with routine, the tablets also provided a structured and predictable

platform that supports daily activities and coping strategies.

By providing this technology, we have not only addressed immediate needs but also helped lay the groundwork for long-term developmental progress. These tools serve as bridges to learning, connection, and independence—offering each child a better opportunity to thrive in both educational and home environments.



Hospital Travel

We have provided essential financial assistance to many families facing the often-overlooked burden of travel expenses when visiting their children in hospital. For many families, the cost of regular journeys—especially over long distances—can become a significant source of stress during an already challenging time.

By offering financial support specifically for transportation, we have helped ease this burden, enabling parents and caregivers to be present with their children during critical periods of treatment and recovery.

This presence is not only emotionally reassuring for the child but also plays a vital role in their healing process. Our support has ensured that

financial hardship does not stand in the way of family connection, care, and comfort at a time when it is needed most.

Financial Support



A brief sample of other support we have provided

In addition to our core support, we have provided essential household items such as beds, mattresses, and white goods. We funded the completion of two wet rooms and replaced hazardous flooring to improve home safety. We also supported individual needs, including a competition bow for a talented young archer, an autism vest, and an egg chair for a child with autism. Our help extended to funding a football training programme and kit, a personal oxygen and blood monitor, and a specialised stroller with tray. We also financially supported a family with funeral costs. Unfortunately, we cannot list every item or project we've helped with, but this offers a glimpse into the wide range of support we provide.

Updates from Issue 6

Update and Impact of the Ki Mobility Little Wave Flip XP Wheelchair for Mohamed

We are pleased to provide an update regarding the recent acquisition of the Ki Mobility Little Wave Flip XP paediatric wheelchair for Mohamed, a 4-year-old boy currently undergoing treatment for leukemia and managing multiple complex medical conditions including epilepsy, hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy (HIE), dystonia, paralysis, and blindness. Due to Mohamed's physical limitations and frequent hospital visits, a specialised wheelchair was essential to ensure his comfort, safety, and ease of transport. After careful assessment by his healthcare team, the Ki Mobility Little Wave Flip XP was identified as the ideal solution to meet his mobility and positioning needs.

This model features:

- Tilt-in-space seating and reclining functions
- Height-adjustable armrests
- Lightweight and compact design for easy folding and transport
- Secure vehicle fastening options

Since receiving the wheelchair, Mohamed's hospital visits have become significantly less stressful for both him and his family. The adjustable seating and reclining functions have greatly improved his comfort during travel and waiting times. The lightweight design allows for easy handling by caregivers, and its compact foldability ensures convenient storage and transport.

Mohamed's family has expressed deep gratitude for the support that made this purchase possible, emphasising how the wheelchair has enhanced Mohamed's quality of life and mobility during a challenging period. The acquisition of the Ki Mobility Little Wave Flip XP wheelchair has proven to be a vital investment in Mohamed's care. It has directly contributed to improving his comfort, safety, and accessibility to necessary medical care. Mohamed and his family appreciate the generosity of all who contributed to making this possible.



Update on Jhye

We are delighted to share an important update regarding Jhye diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy (GMFCS Level 5). Thanks to the generous support and kindness of donors, we have now been able to purchase the Symmetrikit Tiltrite Chair that he urgently needed.



This specialised chair offers the vital postural support and comfort that his previous seating arrangements could not provide. Before receiving this chair, he spent much of his time either in an unsuitable feeding chair, on the floor where he was uncomfortable, or confined to his bed, isolated from family interactions in the living room.

Since the arrival of the Symmetrikit Tiltrite Chair, the family have already seen a remarkable improvement in Jhye's comfort and wellbeing. The chair's exceptional adjustability and support

have allowed him to sit more comfortably and safely, promoting better posture and pressure relief. This has enabled him to engage more fully with family activities, watch TV and spend quality time with his little sister in a shared space. The difference in Jhye's mood and interaction has been profound. What was once a source of discomfort and isolation has now become a place of joy, inclusion, and connection. The chair has not only enhanced his physical comfort but also enriched his social and emotional wellbeing.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to making this possible. Your generosity has had a transformative impact on Jhye's quality of life and his family as a whole.

Update on Toby

Toby's progress in 2025 has been nothing short of phenomenal.

He has now received his international classification, which allows him to compete and rank officially on the world stage. His performances on international tracks in Switzerland this year have cemented his status as one of the most promising young wheelchair racers in the world.

Toby is currently ranked: (As of 10/06/2025)

UK Under 17's Rankings

100m 1st, 400m 1st, 800m TBC

UK Rankings for all ages including Adults

100m 2nd, 400m 6th, 800m TBC

World Rankings Under 17's

100m 3rd, 400m 2nd, 800m 2nd

World Rankings All age groups

100m 51st, 400m 54th, 800m 46th

His personal best times now stand at:

100m 16.14, 400m 57.02, 800m 1.49.10

These can all change periodically to keep updated please visit our website. www.makethemsmile.org.uk



Earlier this year, Toby also competed in the TCS London Mini Marathon and won first place, making him the 2025 T54 Wheelchair Champion with a winning time of 7 minutes, 25 seconds.

The coming year (2026) is filled with exciting opportunities. Toby will compete in the Vienna International, Swiss Junior Championships, and multiple European events. He is also preparing to return to the UK School Games, where in 2024 he won gold in the Universal Relay and silver in the 100m. Only the most elite young athletes in the country are selected for this biennial event.

Update on Sensory Garden for Frankie

We are pleased to confirm that the sensory garden for Frankie has now been fully funded, thanks to the kindness and generosity of our supporters.

Frankie, who was born prematurely, lives with Down syndrome, spinal hyperextension, hyper-mobile joints, and low muscle tone.

The garden includes a bench planter, soft shapes house, bell flower, calming cocoon, wooden painting easel, mud kitchen, sandpit with cover, and a children's bowling alley—each carefully chosen to meet her needs.

The total project cost of £4,053 has been met, and the garden will soon provide Frankie with a safe, calming space where she can grow, learn, and thrive. Thank you for making this possible.

Project Update: Equipment Support for Wilson Stuart School

Thanks to the generosity of our donors and supporters in 2024/25, we are delighted to confirm the purchase of one Acheeva Learning Station and £5,000 worth of sensory equipment for Wilson Stuart School in Erdington, Birmingham.



Wilson Stuart School

A Special Academy

Wilson Stuart is a specialist SEN school providing exceptional education for children with complex physical and learning disabilities.

During our 2024 visit to the school, we were deeply moved by the passion and dedication of the staff. Their heartfelt gratitude for the equipment was evident, especially as we saw students actively engaging with the donated resources.

One memorable moment was watching pupils perform "Let It Go" from Frozen — a powerful reminder of the impact of your support.

However, the need remains great. Staff shared their ongoing requirements for further Acheeva Learning Stations, Eyegaze systems, specialised seating, and additional sensory equipment. These items are essential in helping pupils learn, communicate, and participate fully in daily activities.

We are still seeking funding for:

- 1 Acheeva Learning Stations (£7,509.06)
- 1 Eyegaze System (£7,568.63)
- 10 Specialised Seats (£2,500.00)
- Sensory Equipment (£2,000.00)

Total: £19,578.23

These tools promote inclusion, communication, physical wellbeing, and emotional development for children with profound needs.

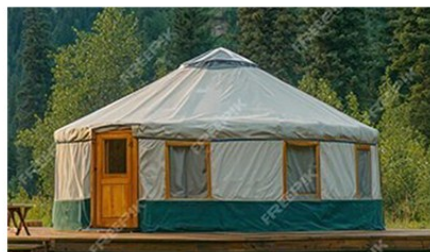
Your continued support can help transform learning environments and open up new possibilities for these incredible students. Thank you for making this possible



Project Update: Horticultural Therapy for Children in Devon

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we are delighted to report that the refurbishment of the yurt at our inclusive horticultural project site in South Devon has now been fully funded and paid for. In addition, £2,250 has been spent on essential gardening equipment to support the children's learning and engagement.

This unique project offers children—particularly those who are neurodiverse or have additional needs—the opportunity to connect with nature, learn about sustainability, and improve their emotional and physical well-being through land and plant therapy. The rural site, accessible to all, features a young woodland, orchard, strawbale barn, growing spaces, and fully adapted facilities.



Children from across Devon—including Torquay, Paignton, Plymouth, and Exeter—regularly visit the site to benefit from its therapeutic and educational experiences.

The recently refurbished yurt, now wheelchair accessible and equipped with a wood-burning stove and fire guard, provides a warm, sheltered space for crafts, group activities, and overnight stays near a peaceful pond.

To further enhance the experience, we have already purchased:

- Safe, child-friendly gardening tools
- Small tool bags
- Wellington boots

We are continuing to seek the remaining £3,008.00 to fully fund the following:

- Raised wooden growing beds
- Additional gardening equipment
- A further secure storage shed for the additional tools

This project continues to grow in reach and impact, creating an urgent need for further resources. Your continued support will ensure that every child, regardless of their ability or background, can experience the joy and healing power of nature. Thank you for helping us bring this vision to life.

Hydrotherapy & Physiotherapy Sessions:



On average, we provide over 150 hydrotherapy sessions for children each year.

The demand is growing steadily, and we currently have more than 20 children waiting for hydrotherapy and physiotherapy to aid their recovery from various conditions.

In 2024 alone, we provided over 140 sessions.

Hydrotherapy is especially beneficial for children with disabilities who have limited mobility or movement, or who require rehabilitation following surgery. It is particularly valuable for children with cerebral palsy, as it helps improve muscle strength while allowing freedom of movement. Beyond specific conditions, hydrotherapy offers a low-impact form of exercise, reducing stress on joints, bones, and muscles because the buoyancy of water supports the body's weight.

An Hydrotherapy pool is maintained at a warm temperature of approximately 32-34°C, which helps increase circulation, relax muscles, reduce swelling, ease muscle spasms, and alleviate pain.

Physiotherapists work closely with children and their families to identify movement and functional challenges. They develop personalised treatment plans to help manage symptoms and promote functional mobility. activities that children can continue with their families and at school.

This includes assessment, treatment, and guidance on exercises and activities that children can continue with their families and at school.

Each hydrotherapy or physiotherapy session costs £90.00. Our goal is to support as many children as possible.

To provide six sessions for one child costs £540.00, while six sessions for 10 children costs £5,400.00.

Annual Ongoing Initiatives/Commitments

We provide respite breaks for over 115 Children and their families each year

A short break away can be vital to the survival of family relationships during the challenging journey of childhood illnesses. We believe it's crucial to offer families the quality time together they desperately need—away from hospitals, doctors, and treatments.

Our two respite homes are located at Haven's Golden Sands Holiday Park in Mablethorpe. The park offers amenities suitable for all ages, regardless of weather, and are fully wheelchair friendly with easy access to nearby facilities.

Our respite homes are thoughtfully equipped with:

- Wheelchair access ramps
- Hoists in main bedrooms
- Adapted wet rooms
- Lowered work surfaces, light switches, and sockets
- Extra-wide sliding doors and wheelchair access to every room
- Central heating and double glazing



The two homes at Mablethorpe are dedicated exclusively to respite care, welcoming children with a wide range of disabilities, illnesses, and disorders. Here, children can recuperate in a peaceful and tranquil setting—especially those recovering from operations or dealing with the emotional challenges of their conditions.

Providing Holidays for between 50 and 60 families each year

Our holiday home at Butlins is dedicated to providing families with young children from underprivileged or poverty-stricken backgrounds the chance to enjoy a much-needed break away from everyday stresses.



Currently, many families across the UK are facing alarmingly high levels of child poverty. For the first time in nearly two decades, child poverty is rising in absolute numbers. This has far-reaching consequences—child poverty is linked to numerous health challenges, poorer educational outcomes, and negative long-term social and psychological effects.

The health impacts of poverty can limit children's development and potential, often leading to diminished opportunities and wellbeing in adulthood.

We strongly believe that every child deserves the right not to feel excluded from everyday activities and to participate in experiences that many might consider normal.

While our homes offer incredible respite opportunities and holidays for families in need, they rely heavily on ongoing funding to operate. We must cover essential costs such as

site fees, gas, electricity, water, insurance, and other necessary expenses. Additionally, with the large number of families using our homes, wear and tear, along with occasional breakages, are inevitable.

Replacing and repairing these items promptly is essential to maintain a safe and welcoming environment for all who visit.

The Total annual running costs for our 3 Respite and Holiday homes for 2025 will be between £32,591.00 and £35,961.00

Emotional and Practical Support – We're Here When You Need Us Most

Talking through life's challenges can be incredibly healing. At Make Them Smile, we understand the emotional toll serious illness can take—not just on the child, but on the entire family. That's why we offer an Emotional and Practical Support Line, available seven days a week, to provide guidance, reassurance, and a listening ear



When a child is facing a life-changing or terminal illness, the whole family feels the weight of it. Parents, siblings, and grandparents alike often need support—emotionally and practically. We're here to help families navigate those dark and uncertain times, whether that means talking things through, answering difficult questions, or pointing you in the right direction. Some people hesitate to reach out, believing it shows weakness. But seeking support is a sign of strength. Talking to someone who understands can be life-changing.

Emotional support helps people feel less isolated, builds resilience, and offers the hope and strength needed to keep going. Clinical research shows that emotional support can improve mental wellbeing, enhance immune function, and even increase life expectancy.

Sometimes, just knowing someone cares can make all the difference.

Our family support officers are not trained social workers, but they are compassionate, dedicated, and committed to helping in any way they can. If we don't know the answer, we'll do our best to find it.

Contact Us: Support Line: 0330 1330 870. Mon–Fri: 8:00am–5:30pm - Sat–Sun: 8:00am–12:00pm

24hr Emergency Line: 07725 099 584

General Support: support@makethemsmile.org.uk

Bereavement & Emotional Support:

Kelly McWilliams: kelly@makethemsmile.org.uk - Karen Robeson: karen@makethemsmile.org.uk

You're not alone—we're always here to listen, guide, and support.

You can find more information regarding all our projects on our website: makethemsmile.org.uk

If you feel you can help or would like to donate to any of our projects, you can do this by bank transfer direct to our bank account or at any Lloyds Bank, our details are

Sort Code 77-72-25 - Account number 40723568

or alternatively, by visiting our website: www.makethemsmile.org.uk and click on the **donate** button.

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