



THE TANGRAM

AUTUMN / WINTER 2021 EDITION



**CEREBRAL
PALSY** CYMRU

THERAPY AND SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES
THERAPI A CHEFNOGAETH I BLANT A'U TEULUOEDD



TAKE PART IN
3,000 STAR JUMPS
IN NOVEMBER
FOR CEREBRAL PALSY CYMRU

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Welcome to the latest edition of The Tangram

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter, The Tangram.

Since our last update, there has been lots of activity happening across all areas of the charity. On top of the 536 therapy sessions that have been delivered both virtually and face to face, we have successfully delivered our Independent Living Skills programme and our Jungle Explorers project, both of which you can read about in this newsletter.

I am delighted to say that on the 24th of September, we successfully hosted our first in-person fundraising event as Cerebral Palsy Cymru, after 21 long months without any face-to-face events. Our Sparkling Afternoon Tea went down a treat with supporters and families alike, and it was wonderful to see so many familiar faces as well as some new ones too.

As you can see on the opposite page, we will be launching our first Facebook challenge event this November and it's not too late to sign up!

This will be a fundraising first for us as a charity, and we would love to see as many of our families, friends and supporters take on the '3,000 Star Jumps in November' challenge to raise vital funds for us.

On the 6th October we marked World CP Day and were proud to be a part of their #MillionReasons campaign. Cerebral palsy affects over 17 million people worldwide, and it is estimated that around 70 babies will be born in Wales each year who will have the condition.



Alongside this newsletter, you will have received an invitation to support our children and families by giving a regular monthly donation.

As a charity, we need to raise approximately £1.8M every year, and around 80% of this total comes from fundraising activity and donations. By making a regular gift to us, you will be providing us with the security to plan ahead for the future and enabling us to be there for those babies who need us now, and for those yet to be born.

Finally, thank you to those who ran the virtual London Marathon for us on Sunday 3rd October, myself and my colleague, Dawn, Clinical Expert Physiotherapist, joined the 50,000 runners too and managed to complete it within the 24 hours!

I hope that you enjoy reading this edition of The Tangram, and I thank you once again for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny'.

Jenny Carroll

Centre Director & Consultant Physiotherapist



On October 6th we celebrated World Cerebral Palsy Day. This date is marked as a day when people around the world come together to celebrate and support those living with cerebral palsy, to embrace diversity, and to show their support in helping create a more accessible future for everyone.

This year, the awareness campaign and theme for World CP Day was 'Millions of Reasons' to represent the 17 million people worldwide who have cerebral palsy. The campaign also raised global awareness that children and adults living with cerebral palsy should have the same rights, access and opportunities as anyone else in our society.

As a charity, our mission is to improve the quality of life of all children in Wales living with cerebral palsy by providing them with specialist therapy. Our therapists focus on ability, not disability, and understand that every child is unique.

Although our focus for therapy is on early intervention, as you will read in this edition of the newsletter we sometimes receive grant funding for specific projects for older children with different types of cerebral palsy.

Bradley, who is 17 years old, is one of the young adults who attended one of our specialist projects in 2019.

Bradley uses eye-gaze computer technology to communicate, and this helps him access anything from emails to video games and online content such as Facebook and Google.

For World CP Day 2021, and as part of the 'Millions of Reasons' movement, Bradley has shared his story and a special message to everyone living with cerebral palsy.

"I am the same as everybody else, the only difference is that I need a communication device because I can't talk out of my mouth. There isn't much difference between me compared to you, it's just I need to be with people to help me with my day-to-day routines. This does not hinder my life but allows me to have close relationships with my family, girlfriend, and staff."

Disability is not a limitation or a barrier. I can do anything I want and I have CP, I have aspirations and goals and I have CP. It does not define me but is a part of me and I'm proud of who I am. I want others to feel empowered by their disabilities and find strength in the possibility of progression. Don't give up, just find a way around."

Scan the QR code to watch Bradley's World CP Day 2021.



Every year in Wales,
approximately

70 BABIES

will be born who will have
cerebral palsy.

Since April, we have
provided 536
specialist therapy
sessions to 192
children across Wales.



MILLIONS OF REASONS

Oct 6

World Cerebral Palsy Day

The current UK incidence rate is
around 1 in 400 births.

There are an estimated **30,000**
children living with cerebral palsy
in the UK.

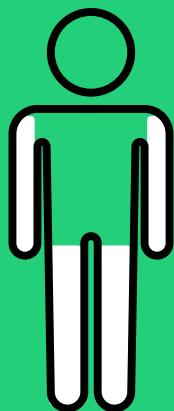
Cerebral palsy affects more than
17 MILLION
people worldwide



It is the most common physical disability in
childhood. Every baby with cerebral palsy is unique
with their own particular strengths and challenges.

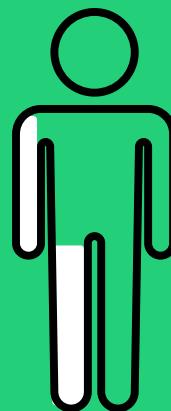
Cerebral palsy is caused by brain damage before, during, or up to two years after birth. It can affect different parts of the body, for example:

Quadriplegia / Bilateral



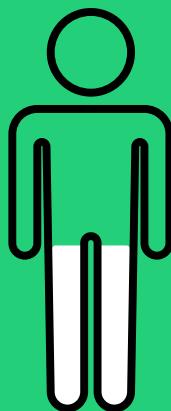
Both arms and legs are affected. The muscles of the trunk, face and mouth are often also affected.

Hemiplegia / Unilateral



One side of the body (one arm and one leg) is affected.

Diplegia / Bilateral



Both legs are affected. The arms may be affected to a lesser extent.

"It has enabled us to develop as a family and achieve goals that I could only dream of."

Our early intervention service, 'Better Start, Better Future', aims to support each family in providing the best start and best future for their child.

Better Start, Better Future is our early intervention programme for babies in Wales who are at risk of, or who have cerebral palsy.

Research shows that the brain is at its most plastic and adaptable during the first 2 years of life. Therefore, this is an important window of opportunity for families and their infants at high risk of cerebral palsy to have early specialist intervention.

A baby's future outcomes are maximised when intervention begins as early as possible and considers the whole family.

Our early intervention service was set up in 2015, and since then we have provided this vital therapy to 358 babies and their families.

Better Start, Better Future has made a life-changing difference to many families throughout this time, like Adrienne and her 4 year-old son Otis, who was referred to our early intervention programme when he was 18 months old.

"It's hard to put into words how incredible the experience has been for us as a family. We were able to have four rounds of therapy through the early intervention programme – amazingly some of these were even managed virtually through the pandemic.



Every round of treatment focused on new goals, which were led by us as a family. The therapy team have always been extremely approachable, knowledgeable and empathetic.

For me, the main difference in the approach at Cerebral Palsy Cymru and their early intervention service was a focus on ability, not disability. Otis was always praised for everything that he was able to do, not what he couldn't, and the team shared delight in the progress he was making. It was such a different experience for us in comparison to many other medical appointments we've endured as a family.

Otis started pre-school this September. Sure, he needs a bit more help than some of his peers, he might be a little wobblier, he might not have mastered jumping or using cutlery. BUT, he is making us proud every single day because we know everything he has already overcome, and we know he'll continue to amaze us with every week that passes."



Having a child with cerebral palsy affects the whole family, and as part of our early intervention service, we also offer a family support service to all those families who wish to access it. Our Family Support Coordinator, Glenys Evans, is often the first point of contact for many of our families, and now more than ever, her practical advice and emotional support is a lifeline for many families, like mum Natasha and her daughter Amelia.

"Ever since day one, we have had support from Glenys. She's got such a wealth of knowledge in all aspects of cerebral palsy and she's always been a supportive friendly ear on the other end of the phone. On the day of Amelia's diagnosis, we didn't have anywhere else to turn. We called Cerebral Palsy Cymru and Glenys was at the other end of the phone to listen to us and reassure us that everything would be ok.

Without her, our lives would be completely different, and we will be forever grateful for Glenys and the support that we have received."

Our ambition for the future is to develop and grow our services so that we can make sure we are there for every baby and child who needs us. This ambitious dream can only be possible with your support.

A message from Rachel Morgan, Head of Income Generation

At Cerebral Palsy Cymru, family is at the heart of everything we do. As Wales' only centre of excellence for children with cerebral palsy, we've been providing specialist therapy and support to children and families for almost 30 years.

Cerebral palsy is the most common physical childhood disability in the world, and we want to make sure that every child in Wales with cerebral palsy has the best possible start and experience in life.

We are extremely grateful for the support that we receive from our supporters and sponsors, and I am thrilled that Slater and Gordon Lawyers have pledged to fund our Initial Consultation Service, which enables 40 babies to have an initial early assessment to determine what their future needs may be.

However, the demand for our early intervention service is growing. Following on from the impact that Covid-19 has had on our finances, we are asking if you would consider 'joining our family' and making a monthly gift to ensure we can continue to fund our early intervention service. By setting up a regular gift, you will help make sure that every child with cerebral palsy gets the best start in life possible and their family receives the support they need.

To start making a difference today, please complete the form that you received with this newsletter or visit www.cerebralspacycymru.org/donate-to-help. Thank you. Diolch.





NOMINATE US AS YOUR 2022 CHARITY OF THE YEAR

Do you or one of your friends and family know of a business that hosts a Charity of the Year scheme? Nominating us for 2022, will not only help make a huge difference here at Cerebral Palsy Cymru, but it can be a unique and fulfilling experience for all involved.

"We have worked alongside The Royal Mint as their charity partner for almost 2 years and the staff have come up with some really creative and fun ways to raise funds, even when the more conventional fundraising options have, of course been off the table. Over the years I have seen companies thrive on the challenge of fundraising for us with everyone finding activities to suit them. From bake sales to talent auctions, bike rides to hikes, we've seen it all! In return, we are able to offer tangible examples of how the money raised is being spent and making a difference to families. We are excited to see what 2022, and indeed future years, hold for us and we would love to share that experience with our new Charity of the Year partners!" Claire Walker, Corporate Relationship Manager

If you, or the company you work for, would like to nominate us as your 2022 Charity of the Year, please contact Claire for more information.

Clairew@cerebralspalscymru.org
02920 522 600

THANK YOU! DIOLCH!

Our therapist Rina talks all things training

Rina Van Der Walt, our Consultant Speech & Language Therapist, provides an insight into our therapy training courses and sharing our expert knowledge and skills with health professionals across Wales and beyond.

Hello, I'm Rina and I'm a consultant Speech & Language therapist at Cerebral Palsy Cymru and senior Bobath Tutor. Over the years, I have taught many general and topic-specific courses on assessment and treatment of children and young people with cerebral palsy. My current role involves coordinating the planning, development and presentation of a variety of courses in collaboration with my therapy colleagues at Cerebral Palsy Cymru and further afield.

Moving online

Before the coronavirus pandemic, all our training courses took place at our therapy centre in Cardiff. However, as a result of Covid-19 related restrictions, last year we had to quickly develop alternative ways to deliver our training courses.

We were thrilled to find that our virtual courses proved to be very popular, primarily because they are unrestricted in terms of geographical location. This meant we could offer our courses to a wider audience and share our knowledge and expertise further afield.

Our Cerebral Palsy Short Courses, which are offered at both an introductory and advanced level, have become much more widely known as a result of moving online, and we recently ran both courses for an occupational therapy and physiotherapy team from an NHS Trust in England – a first for us!

However, as working with children and young people with cerebral palsy requires hands-on work and practice, there is also a need for face-to-face practical sessions, which is why we are hoping to offer a hybrid training model, combining online teaching and in-person practical sessions where possible.

Our Early Intervention and Assessment course

Earlier this year, we were able to host the practical sessions for our Early Intervention and Assessment course at our new children's centre in Cardiff. Our 32 students were divided into two groups - each group working with babies and their families for 3 consecutive days at the centre. Over the 6 days, 16 babies and their families attended the practical sessions, and it was simply wonderful to see our therapy rooms in our new children's centre alive, and full of activity and children, since we opened in May this year.



"The quality of the lectures were exceptional and inspirational. The course has introduced me to early intervention in babies and infants, and as a result, I have started thinking about how children develop and backward link what I see at later development to their early history. This course has inspired me to explore service developments in our area to improve babies and infants early experiences."

"The Early Intervention Course was wonderfully insightful, there was so much knowledge and experience shared! As a result of attending this course, I have much more knowledge of evidence base for early intervention and feel that my clinical reasoning has developed greatly."



Spending time with colleagues who share the same passion for making a difference in the lives of children and young people living with cerebral palsy always fills me with a tremendous sense of fulfilment. When I teach our courses, there is always an uplifting energy that emerges when our therapy team and the students share creative ideas on how to help children achieve their goals and to participate within their environments with more ease and efficiency!

Looking forward to the future, we are currently in the process of developing a brand-new course which will be an introduction to the practical management of children and young people with cerebral palsy in education settings and is aimed at Learning Support Assistants/Classroom Assistants. I am excited to see the training courses Cerebral Palsy Cymru offers continue to grow and develop, along with the organisation, as we continue to share our knowledge and skills through collaborative working and teaching.



To find out more about the training courses that we offer, please visit www.cerebralspalsycymru.org/for-professionals or email info@cerebralspalsycymru.org

Why gifts in Wills are so important to us

Did you know that, on average, the gifts in Wills that we receive each year enable us to fund around 63 babies every year to have a vital early assessment. Babies that either have, or are at high risk of cerebral palsy and their families, who need our support as soon as possible.

Because we only receive around 20% of the funding we need from statutory sources, our specialist service that we provide for children and families in Wales is very reliant on the generous support that readers like yourself can give.

The number of babies and their families needing our service is increasing each year. Please consider helping us to be there for those babies yet to be born. Every gift – no matter the size – makes a difference. Even 1% (so those closest to you inherit 99%) or a modest sum of money will help.

The impact that we have is often best described by the children and families who come to us...

"Following a block of specialist therapy, William was able to sit up on his own. Following a further block of therapy, he started crawling. William is now able to walk independently – he falls a lot and is very clumsy, but he has exceeded all our expectations. The intensity, duration and expertise of the therapists have produced astounding results. We feel privileged to have had the help and support from Cerebral Palsy Cymru and are sure that William's achievements are due to the skill of the therapists so early on in his life."

Rebecca, William's Mum



To find out more or to download a free information pack, please visit
www.cerebralspacycymru.org/get-involved/make-a-donation/leave-a-gift-in-your-will

Alternatively, to let us know that you have left, or would be willing to leave, a gift in your Will please contact Emma Brooks on 02920 522600 or email emmab@cerebralspacycymru.org



"We love getting to know all of our 'Jungle Explorers' and their families. Each and every one of them brings something unique and positive to the project. There was a particular favourite moment for me this year that I would love to share with you. The children had made party food for their families, and they then had to carry this on a tray along the length of a corridor into the family room. When entering the room, the families broke into spontaneous applause for each child. It showed real group spirit and the children were so visibly proud of themselves. If you understood how difficult carrying a tray is for some of these children, you would have been proud of them too!"

Marissa Mount
Occupational Therapist

Come explore the jungle with us!

Our Jungle Explorers project, which is kindly funded by BBC Children in Need, has been specifically developed for children who have unilateral cerebral palsy, where one side of their body is more affected than the other. It's a fun and age-appropriate way of providing intensive upper limb intervention, with the aim of developing the child's ability to use both hands more effectively for functional tasks.

At the start of the project, the children and their families identify functional goals which are meaningful to them that they would like to work on and improve. These can range from activities such as being able to dress more independently, using cutlery to make a sandwich or open a packet of crisps, climbing stairs, or riding a bike.

This year, our 6 jungle explorers took part in several group sessions, as well as receiving 1:1 therapy where they worked in pairs and with their therapist to develop their individual skills.

The group sessions have an emphasis of working together as a team, having fun, and socialising. Our therapy team adapt the activities for each specific individual as much as possible, ensuring that each individual gets the most out of both the 1:1 and group sessions.

An integral part of the project is providing the children the opportunity to socialise with other children who have unilateral cerebral palsy.

All of the children included in the programme attend a mainstream school which means that they may have never met another child who has similar abilities and who experiences similar challenges to them. A huge value of 'Jungle Explorers' is that the children have an opportunity to share their successes and challenges, often common amongst the whole group, in a safe environment.

"My daughter really enjoyed the programme and we saw a huge change in her confidence levels, as well as a massive improvement in the use of her left hand and the strength in her left leg. She was excited to meet other children with similar conditions and really enjoyed the course and making friends."

LLONGYFARCHIADAU! CONGRATULATIONS!

Well done to all our 2021 Virgin London Marathon runners!
We are all so proud of you!



Run for us!

Lace up your trainers to take on a running challenge in aid of us. Whatever the distance, we promise to support you every step of the way.

Email fundraising@cerebralspalscymru.org to find out more about our 2022 runs and races.

Independent Living Skills 2021

Find out more about our ILS project which aims to give young people living with cerebral palsy the chance to work on their skills and become increasingly independent as they approach adulthood.



Hello! We are Charlotte, Chase and Rhys - three young people living with cerebral palsy. We all attended the Independent Living Skills (ILS) project in August and wanted to share with you our own personal experiences of that week. ILS is a project run by Cerebral Palsy Cymru that gives young people like us living with cerebral palsy the opportunity to develop skills and increase our independence. We hope you enjoy reading our blogs and finding out a little more about us.



"My name is Rhys and I am 13 years old. I find it ok having cerebral palsy. I just persevere and do the things I want to do. I was really happy when I was asked if I wanted to take part in the ILS programme.

I saw taking part in the ILS project as a great opportunity to work on my skills, in particular making myself a drink and something to eat. These were the goals I wanted to work on – I also wanted to practice my football skills.

Every day at ILS we had a group discussion and then we would go and work on our own goals. On the last but one day, we went out as a group together to the shops and then to McDonald's. That was really good fun.

My favourite activity for the week was gardening. I like gardening and enjoyed getting out all the weeds and planting the flowers. If you get the chance to go on the ILS programme at Cerebral Palsy Cymru, take it. You never know when you will get the opportunity again and it's really good fun. It helped me learn new skills and build confidence when going out."



"Hi my name is Charlotte and I have just turned 15, I use both my wheelchair and walker to get about. I was very excited when asked if I would like to attend the Independent Living Skills project at Cerebral Palsy Cymru.

As day one approached, I began to feel quite apprehensive, as these sessions were going to be very different to the therapy sessions I had attended in the past. I was also going to be meeting other teenagers with CP, not something I was used to doing!!

On the first morning, I ate my breakfast nervously and got in the car. We arrived at the new centre and what can I say, it was amazing, a lovely bright new reception, manned by a few familiar faces, and fantastic therapy rooms!

We found out that we would be working as a group and individually on everyday goals we wanted to achieve, but we would be doing this without our mums or dads! As a group, we all wanted to work on everyday things and gain more independence, like making and carrying a cup of tea or washing our hair, which might sound easy but for us, it can be quite tricky! Some of us had goals around putting our makeup on more easily and one day we had a visit from Spectrum cosmetics. We were treated to our very own personal makeup lesson, which was fantastic!!!!

On another day we all ventured out shopping, some of us for the first time. We looked at how we could get there and how we were going to navigate around, some of us with wheelchairs. It was all very exciting as I'm a shopaholic!

Overall this was a fantastic experience and it was lovely to make new friends and chat about some of the things that are difficult for us, that others might not understand, along with achieving goals that make life a little more easier. Thank you for helping me gain more independence."



"Hello everyone, my name is Chase I am 15 years old, and I have cerebral palsy. Personally, I get tired easily as walking can be difficult. I do struggle speaking to people about my cerebral palsy and also I struggle with making friends, and sometimes it makes me feel like I am alone with this condition. It has always been a big insecurity of mine.

When I was first asked to take part in the ILS project, I felt excited because it would give me an opportunity to meet and speak to others with cerebral palsy and work with the therapists at Cerebral Palsy Cymru.

As a group we all talked about our feelings when in different situations and we did group work around this. I made a strawberry cheesecake by following a recipe, which was one of my goals, and we all made milkshakes. One of the days we all went out shopping as a group and then afterwards we went to McDonalds, which is next to the centre. My favourite activity was when I made the cheesecake as I felt so proud of myself afterwards.

My anxiety and confidence in talking to others about my cerebral palsy has improved since taking part in ILS. I was given tips on how to cope with my anxiety such as breathing exercises, and the advice and support that I was given by therapists and other teenagers that attended meant that I became more confident and I am now able to talk about my cerebral palsy.

To others that are reading this, please don't ever feel like you are alone because you're not. Being different is okay. Yes, it can be a challenge for all of us young people living with cerebral palsy, but we are all strong and we can do anything - don't let anyone tell you you can't."

Fundraising corner

Celebrating all the ways people across the country come together to help raise funds and make a difference to children and families living with cerebral palsy.

Our fundraising heroes in the community

We love hearing about our supporters' fundraising stories and would like to share some of our favourite community fundraising stories from the past 6 months with you all.

Audrey, Susannah, Matthew, and Peter organised an August Bank Holiday community cake sale and by the sounds of things, their homemade goodies went down a treat!



"Our street decided to celebrate the end of lockdown by having some social time in their front gardens on the Bank Holiday Weekend. As part of that, I decided to host a cupcake stall because I love baking and I

thought it would be a good way to say hello to people on the street I hadn't met before. Our cakes sold out really quickly (I should have made more!) and we raised £135 in just a few hours!"

Thompsons Solicitors, who have adopted us as their Charity of the Year, took on a mammoth fundraising challenge across August to celebrate their centenary year. Between them, the team ran over 500k, completed 100k steps, baked 100 cookies, surfed 100 waves, rowed/biked 200k, and swam 400 lengths/6.5 miles as part of their 100 Challenge to celebrate their centenary year. Together, the team has raised a fantastic £1,060!

On the theme of Charity of the Year, we were delighted to receive the news that Cardiff Rotary Club have kindly nominated us as their charity for 2021. Their members, lead by Michael Brook, are now busy raising funds and awareness for us in their local community and we would like to thank them for thinking of us when making their selection.

Although the past year and a half has been difficult for many of us, our fundraisers have still managed to find inventive ways to raise money and support us whilst abiding by lockdown restrictions and social distancing.

Sue, who is a staff nurse at a hospice in West Wales, set herself the challenge of walking the Wales Costal Path at the start of this year and completed her epic walk last month.

"I initially began walking during the first lockdown in 2020 as I was unable to go swimming and quickly found that I enjoyed the time I had to myself. In January I set myself the challenge of walking the distance of the Wales Coastal Path. However, as we were once again back in lockdown, I had to complete my challenge virtually. At the beginning of my challenge, I had to start my walks from home and I decided that if I had a charity to walk for, I would be more motivated to keep going and achieve my 870-mile target. I chose Cerebral Palsy Cymru as I had heard about their 'Build a Better Future' appeal for their new children's centre and wanted to support this fantastic project. Once lockdown was lifted, I was able to walk on the coastal path and my walks became more scenic. Even though I have completed the 870 mile challenge, I haven't stopped walking as I still really enjoy the quiet time it gives me! I can't wait to see the new children's centre once it is completed - I am sure the children and families will love it."



The wonderful world of charity retail

Our four charity shops, based in and around Cardiff, are responsible for around 37% of our charitable income every year. They really are a hive of fundraising activity!

Mowgli's Street Food Cardiff celebrate reaching £20k!

Mowgli Street Food Cardiff adopted us as their in-house charity partner back in the autumn of 2019. Despite the ups and downs that the hospitality industry has faced, their customers have continued to support us by adding £1 on their bill, which is then kindly donated to us each month.

We are thrilled to announce that they have now reached a phenomenal £20,000 through this donation scheme, which is an incredible achievement.



The Mowgli Street Food restaurants across the country have raised almost £1 million to date for local causes, and we are proud to be a part of their family. Our fundraising team are certainly looking forward to celebrating with the staff at the Cardiff restaurant and enjoying a chat bomb or two!



Looking through the window of our charity shop



You never know what you might find when you pop into your local charity shop. From designer handbags to rare vinyl records, there are many special and unusual items tucked away on the shelves.

Our charity shops play a huge role in our fundraising activity, and prior to the pandemic were consistently generating around one-third of the charity's total income. That's a lot of donations and sales!

Since they were able to reopen on 12th April, our shops have brought in a remarkable £167,151 despite the challenges they have faced as a result of restrictions.

"I am so grateful to all of our donors, customers, shop staff, and amazing volunteers who have all played a part in helping to ensure that our shops have re-opened successfully and, of course, safely after what was an extremely challenging and worrying time when we were closed for over 4 months during the winter lockdown" said George Parry, Senior Retail Manager. "Our shops are very much part of their local communities and it is so nice to be able to welcome people through the doors once again."

We are especially thrilled to see so many of our regular volunteers back behind the tills and busy sorting through donations behind the scenes, and we want to say a huge thanks to those of you reading this! Without our volunteers' continued hard work and dedication, we simply wouldn't be able to open the doors to our shops every morning and welcome our customers in to see our gems of second-hand goodies.



theBigGive

CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE

30 NOV—7 DEC 2021



One donation. Twice the impact.

Once again at the start of December we will be taking part in the Big Give Christmas Challenge. This year, we have decided to set ourselves our most ambitious fundraising target to date and are aiming to raise £20,000 in just 7 days to help fund our early intervention service for babies who have or are at high risk of cerebral palsy.

Why have we done this? Because quite simply, those babies and families, like Cora and her mum Jennifer, need our support now more than ever.



Cora's story

"Cora was born full term and was diagnosed with hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy (HIE), which is essentially oxygen deprivation and a lack of blood flow to the brain which occurred during labour. Cora underwent cooling therapy for 72 hours after she was born, in an attempt to slow down her rate of brain damage.

Her paediatrician has only in the last few months confirmed he believes she has cerebral palsy, although the signs have been there since the very early days.

Cora was around 10 weeks old when we had our first session with Sally and Glenys. We instantly felt at ease and as if we had found exactly who we were looking for. We felt we finally had direction and something positive to focus on with Cora. It's very hard when you are told to just 'wait and see' how your child develops, so we felt we were at least doing our very best for her development and future. Our first therapy session was over zoom as this was early on in the pandemic in August 2020. We then went into the centre in person the following month for a session.

Each session would typically start with a general catch-up to work on how Cora has been doing and discuss any concerns or focuses we would like for the session ahead. We very much go with her mood as well and try keep her interested and as happy as possible. Most of the time she has great fun!

I only stumbled across Cerebral Palsy Cymru whilst frantically googling for services in our area one evening. I felt that there had to be something out there for children like Cora where no formal diagnosis had been made and I was very happy to find that there was! I filled out a self-referral form on the website for their 'Better Star, Better Future' early intervention programme and heard from Glenys (the charity's Family Support Coordinator) shortly after.



From that day we feel we have been part of the Cerebral Palsy Cymru family, and we have not looked back. Glenys, and Cora's therapists Sally, Gosia and Rina have been our go-to people for any questions from day one. There is such a lack of resource and advice out there for children who are not 'neuro typical' so the team have really been a fountain of knowledge. Things like the physiotherapists helping select appropriate toys, Glenys has discussed sleep problems with us and advice on filling out a Disability Living Allowance form. All of these helpful 'extras' that we appreciate so much that have supported our family.

Cerebral Palsy Cymru have made an enormously positive impact on our family. Everyone we have met has been so supportive and helpful to us, we couldn't have wished for more."

This Christmas, you have the opportunity to have your donation doubled by making it via the Big Give Christmas Challenge. Thanks to the generous match funding scheme, which has been made possible by The Hospital Saturday Fund and our long-standing supporter Derek Redwood, every donation will be doubled. If you would like to make a special Christmas gift to help make a difference to babies and their families, like Cora and Jennifer, please visit www.thebiggive.org.uk between 12pm 30th November and 12pm on 7th December.

You can also sign up to our emailing list by scanning this QR code or by visiting www.cerebralspacycymru.org/newsletter to receive a reminder for the launch of the 2021 Big Give Christmas Challenge.

Don't miss the chance to have your donation doubled and make a Christmas gift that will last the whole year.





Because we know.

Together we can

make a difference.

About Cerebral Palsy Cymru

We are a national centre of excellence for families in Wales with children who have cerebral palsy. Our specialist team of physiotherapists, occupational therapists and speech and language therapists work together to offer transdisciplinary skills, so each child benefits from their combined expertise. We also offer a family support service which provides a listening ear, advice and support to those who need it.

To find out more about us as an organisation, please visit

www.cerebralspacycymru.org

 info@cerebralspacycymru.org

 02920 522 600

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