

# LITTLE STARS

Spring Edition 2023

welcome to our spring newsletter



Interview with  
Paediatric  
Cardiologist,  
Dr. Orla Franklin

Inside:

The life-saving  
difference you  
made to Rosie



Dare to  
be Brave

And much more...



Children's Health  
FOUNDATION

Crumlin • Temple Street • Tallaght • Connolly

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S HEALTH IRELAND

# WELCOME!

## It's wonderful to have you with us...

As winter gives way to spring, it feels like a time of growth – a time of hope.

Every single day, your generosity is making amazing things happen in our hospitals. In this issue of Little Stars we're proud to share with you just some of the stories of your impact.

As you read through these pages – meeting patients, families, staff, fundraisers and more – we hope you'll see how your kindness is at the heart of our community of care. From all of us at Children's Health Foundation, thank you so much for generously helping to make this work possible.

**Ruth Guy, Director of Fundraising, Marketing and Communications**



## Abseil FOR Ava

### An amazing fundraiser for a truly remarkable young woman

After 13-year-old Ava was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, she received treatment on St John's Ward, in Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin. Her family described her as being incredibly brave throughout her diagnosis and treatment.

Inspired by her bravery, they decided to organise an 'Abseil for Ava' fundraising event. One day in April last year, eight of her family members climbed down Dalkey Quarry.



Ava was unable to attend the abseil due to her illness, but she was extremely proud of her family's fundraising, as well as their efforts on the day. Ava came into Children's Health Foundation on the day of the cheque presentation. Her Auntie Orla said Ava was thrilled, although she couldn't take part in the abseil itself, she was delighted to be handing over a cheque for over €8,000 to Children's Health Foundation to help other sick children like herself.

Sadly, Ava died on the 17th September 2022. She was such a remarkable person with a real thirst for life. Ava brought a sparkle to everyone who met her, and she is missed immensely. We are deeply grateful to Ava and her family for raising vital funds and for allowing us to share her story.

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# ONE STRONG ONE-WEEK OLD

## How supporters like you had a life-saving impact on tiny Rosie

One-week-old Rosie had suddenly begun to cry. She was in obvious distress. Rosie's parents, Susie and JP knew she was in trouble. It was a bank holiday Monday – their GP wasn't available, so they took Rosie straight to the Paediatric Unit in the Accident & Emergency in Mullingar.

The diagnosis was a serious one: Strep B Bacterial Meningitis. Rosie was immediately sent to Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street by ambulance, with her parents following behind, completely in shock.

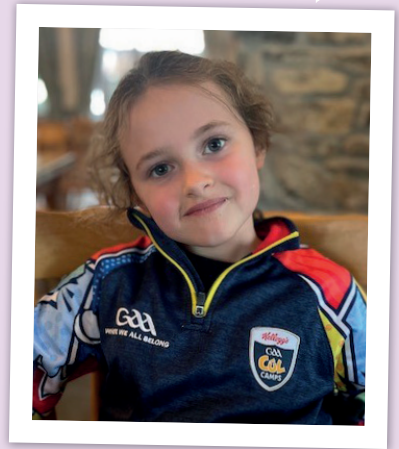
**“We were very worried, but the staff were incredible.”**

Susie will never forget the experience. “We were very worried, but the staff were incredible. I knew she was in good hands. The one-on-one care around the clock that Rosie got was fabulous.”

Susie recalls the stressful moment when Rosie had to go for her MRI scan. Susie waited outside, her heart in turmoil. Once the scan was completed, Susie got to hold little Rosie again.

It was good news. The MRI was all clear – the treatment had worked. You can imagine what a huge relief it was for her family.

Behind every child's story in Children's Health Ireland hospitals and urgent care centres is the story of how your generosity directly connects with patients like little Rosie. It is the story of the vital equipment and upgraded facilities that make every patient's and family's journey less stressful, more comfortable and more positive. And thankfully, Susie tells us that Rosie has started first class and is doing wonderfully.



## Thank you FOR THE MUSIC

**Meet Susan Hurley, one of our Senior Music Therapists**

“Music Therapy, and the work of all of our therapists, make a big difference for children and families in hospital. Music Therapists use music as a tool to achieve health goals. Engaging in music can bring a lot of positive emotions – a lot of fun and joy – as well as being a safe way to express big feelings.”



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# A NEW PAIGE

**Born with a congenital heart defect, little Paige's life hung in the balance**

When Rhona learned that her baby daughter Paige had been born with a rare congenital heart defect, she was devastated. But the medical team

in Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin quickly went to work, providing Paige with the life-saving treatment she urgently needed.

**“Only for the Children's Heart Centre in Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin, her surgeons, cardiology team and nurses our beautiful girl wouldn't be here today.”**

**Rhona, Paige's Mum**

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The first days of new motherhood can be intense and disorienting at the best of times, but Paige's serious heart condition made this a terrifying time for Rhona. She recalls, "when Paige was first diagnosed it was so scary, at that early stage we didn't know how everything would turn out."

**"The staff were just amazing, I will never forget what they did for us."**

With everything that was going on, Rhona and her partner found the care and reassurance of the staff at Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin made a huge difference. "The medical terms were all new to us, but the nurses and doctors explained everything and made sure that we understood what would be happening. They really prepared us for what was to come.

"Paige was in ICU for five days after her surgery and was then brought back to the ward. The staff were just amazing, I will never forget what they did for us."

Once it became clear that Paige was through the worst, her parents felt an immense sense of relief. "I remember when the medical team were getting her ready to be discharged, the tubes and wires surrounding her started to be slowly removed, it was great for us as a family to see," says Rhona.

Rhona remembers being especially touched by how invested the Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin team were in her daughter's recovery. "The staff were just as delighted for her; it was like they were really in it with us." Rhona feels that her family's experience in Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin will always stay with her. "You can be completely oblivious to what goes on in the hospital when you are not in the situation but afterwards your mindset completely changes."



## IT'S all about heart

**Paediatric Cardiologist Dr. Orla Franklin talks about her work caring for the littlest of hearts**

In Ireland every year, 500 children are born with a heart problem. My job is to carry out scans and try to identify what is wrong with a child's heart, then to work with my colleagues to see what we can do to help make them better. Every aspect of my work is positively influenced by the generosity of people who kindly donate to Children's Health Foundation.

When I'm in the clinic I devote a lot of my energy to working with the parents as well as the child. It's such a scary time, so I do all I can to help parents understand their child's condition and the treatments we're proposing. It's all about building relationships and trust.

Many of the children we see would not survive without the care we provide. The most rewarding aspect of the job is seeing a family like Paige's – who you know have been under the most extraordinary stress coping with their sick child – come back to you when the child is a toddler, with an excellent quality of life and enjoying day-to-day activities that are no different to any other child.



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# 2024 ROUTE 66 CHALLENGE

## Hit the road!

This fundraising motorcycle trek across America has been running every two years since 2002... will next year be the year you take part?

The total trip takes 14 days and will see our bikers and pillions travel through nine US states and across four different time zones. You will travel from Illinois through Missouri, Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and Nevada before finally finishing up in California.



To be part of this magic, you need to have a full motorcycle driver's licence and a passion for fundraising! Our bikers are asked to raise €10,000 to take part in this challenge of a lifetime. That might seem like an awful lot – but look at it this way – that's 100 people donating €100! It can be done!

This truly is one of the most exhilarating motorcycle challenges in the world! Our next trip departs for the United States in September 2024. Are you ready to 'get your kicks'?



## Wally and The Warriors

In June 2022, a group of 12 friends who call themselves Wally's Warriors took on the ultimate Irish relay, running non-stop the length of Ireland!

These amazing runners raised more than €50,000 towards music therapy in Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin.

They followed a course that ran from Malin Head, Donegal to Mizen Head, Cork – that's a daunting 569km. The team started training in January and clocked up almost 10,000km in preparation for the challenge.

The reason for this crazy trek? To raise funding for Music Therapy in Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin.

Music Therapy is an evidence-based profession that uses music to help patients reach health goals. Music Therapists like Susan Hurley (see p.3) have specialised Master's level training in the application of music to the therapeutic process, especially in acute paediatric care. Working as part of a multidisciplinary team, they can help children use creativity and self-expression to work towards emotional, social, physical and cognitive goals.

With their amazing run, Wally's Warriors raised an incredible €51,283 – a sum that should sustain the Music Therapy programme at Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin for two years. Music to our ears!

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# RUNNING FOR CHILDRENS' LIVES...

## Why super-dad Dean ran the Dublin marathon to raise vital funds for sick children

When his daughter Bella-Rose began complaining of headaches, Dean Delaney had no idea the difficult journey that lay ahead for him and his family.

He took Bella-Rose to the opticians for an eye exam, during which a swelling was found at the back of her optic nerve. She went into hospital for CT and MRI scans, after which she was transferred to St Gabriel's neurology ward in Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street.

"Neurology and neurosurgery were not words we had heard before," says Dean, recalling this frightening time. "We were met by her neurosurgeon Dr. Crimmins, who explained to us that Bella-Rose had a brain tumour in her cerebellum. Words we will never forget."

**"For the first time in months, she looked like herself again... Our beautiful daughter was back."**

Bella-Rose underwent brain surgery to have the tumour removed. Dean says, "It was the longest day of our lives, she spent seven hours in surgery and was then transferred to ICU. Our Bella-Rose, as dramatic as always, was cracking jokes, slugging the doctors and smiling. For the first time in months, she looked like herself again. The black bags under her eyes were gone and she was no longer in pain. Our beautiful daughter was back."



Dean is deeply thankful to the Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street team – and to supporters like you – for giving his daughter a new lease on life. To show his thanks, he ran the Dublin City Marathon in October and raised a whopping €19,030 to support St. Gabriel's Ward in Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street.

## WOMEN'S MINI MARATHON

On a wet day in June 2022, 15-year-old Sinéad completed the VHI Women's Mini-Marathon in Dublin as a way of giving back to Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin.

"I am doing this as a thank you to all the doctors and nurses who have helped and continue to help me throughout my time in Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin. I hope the money I raise helps other children who need it," she says. Thank you Sinéad, you are wonderful! We hope to have you back for VHI Women's Mini Marathon 2023! For anyone who wants to take part, details can be found on our website at [www.childrenshealth.ie/vhi-womens-mini-marathon-2023/](http://www.childrenshealth.ie/vhi-womens-mini-marathon-2023/)



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# HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US THIS YEAR

## The Great Irish Bake for Sick Children Take part on 31 March 2023

The Great Irish Bake for Sick Children takes place in March. But don't worry if you haven't registered yet, you can host your bake sale whenever suits you. By signing up, you will be doing something really sweet to support sick children and their families. Register online today at [www.childrenshealth.ie/greatirishbake](http://www.childrenshealth.ie/greatirishbake) and we will send you a baking pack containing everything you need to make your event a roaring success – including a Great Irish Bake recipe book, posters and more! Make sure you send us photos of your event; we can't wait to see all your bakes!



## Car and Christmas Raffle

We want to say a massive thank you to everyone who took part in the Car Raffle for Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin and the Christmas raffle for Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street. You raised over **€900,000** which is an incredible achievement. These vital funds will support sick children and their families in Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin and Temple Street. Your support has been phenomenal and continues to change lives each and every day!

Why not join in and play in our next raffle later in the year? Watch this space for details...

## Dare to be Brave for Sick Children

Every year, hundreds of thousands of children put on a brave face and undergo treatment in Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin, Temple Street, Tallaght and Connolly. This year, we are asking you to be brave and raise vital funds to give these children the very best chance, by taking part in one of our adrenaline-inducing events, while supporting Ireland's sick children when they need it most.

Skydive ★ 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> June  
24 Hour Wilderness Survival Challenge ★ 14<sup>th</sup> July  
Abseil ★ 25<sup>th</sup> August & 16<sup>th</sup> September  
Hell & Back ★ 30<sup>th</sup> September

To get involved, visit [www.childrenshealth.ie/daretobebrave](http://www.childrenshealth.ie/daretobebrave) or email [daretobebrave@childrenshealth.ie](mailto:daretobebrave@childrenshealth.ie)



## Trick or Treat for Sick Children

Trick or Treat for Sick Children is back this autumn. Why not join in the Ghoulish fun and host a Halloween party in your crèche or school, your home or community or you can even have one in your workplace and raise funds for the sick children in Children's Health hospitals at Crumlin, Temple Street, Tallaght and Connolly.

Whatever way you do it, you can have some monstrous merriment that will change the lives of sick children. For more information, go to [www.childrenshealth.ie/trickortreat](http://www.childrenshealth.ie/trickortreat)



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