Basildon family to hold Big Chocolate Tea event to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust

Tuesday 27 March, 2018

The mother of a teenage girl who almost lost her life in December 2015 is asking the community to get behind The Sick Children's Trust by attending her Big Chocolate Tea event to raise much-needed funds for the charity.

Emma Tapp, 36, is organising the fundraiser on Saturday 28 April at 'The Place' in Pitsea to raise both money and awareness for the charity which supported her when her daughter was critically ill in hospital, miles away from home.

Emma experienced every parent's worst nightmare when her daughter, Chloe, then 15, collapsed in the middle of the night at their home in Laindon and was rushed into the paediatric intensive care unit (PICU) at Basildon University Hospital. Chloe was intubated and transferred to The Royal London Children's Hospital for specialised treatment. It was at this point that her family were supported by The Sick Children's Trust and given free 'Home from Home' accommodation at its Stevenson House, just minutes from Chloe's hospital bedside.

To thank the charity for giving them a 'Home from Home' while Chloe fought for her life, Emma and her partner Trevor are joining in with the charity's annual Big Chocolate Tea campaign. Big Chocolate Tea is The Sick Children's Trust's biggest annual fundraising event, which runs throughout May and encourages supporters to take part to raise £30 which will support a family with a 'Home from Home' for one night when their loved one is in hospital.

Chloe's parents are hoping others will join them at their event to show support for The Sick Children's Trust. **Mum, Emma, who was supported for eight days at Stevenson House, says:**

"In Basildon, Trevor had been told about The Sick Children's Trust and that arrangements had been made to give us free accommodation once we got to London. He took our things over to Stevenson House when we arrived, but I wasn't ready to leave Chloe. When Trevor came back to the waiting room he told me that the house was only a couple of minutes away and that the staff couldn't have been more welcoming. Stevenson House was a godsend. It meant we could be right there with Chloe whenever we wanted. And if there was a problem during the night, we had a direct telephone line from our bedroom to the ward and could be over there in an instant."

The Sick Children's Trust runs ten 'Homes from Home' across the country supporting families with seriously ill children in hospital. The charity relies entirely on voluntary donations and although the accommodation is free for families it costs the charity £30 to support a family for a night. In 2017, Big Chocolate Tea raised enough money to support 1,167 families with free 'Home from Home' accommodation, just minutes from their critically ill child's hospital bedside. The Sick Children's Trust hopes this year's campaign will be an even greater success. **Stevenson House Manager, Deborah Leonard, says:**

"We are so grateful that Emma has put so much time and effort into organising what is sure to be a fantastic event and hope that many people come along on the day to support The Sick Children's Trust's Big Chocolate Tea campaign.

"When a child is seriously ill, it's an incredibly difficult time and the charity helps ease some of the worries families have by keeping them together by their child's side in free 'Home from Home' accommodation.

"Big Chocolate Tea is such a great campaign as it the perfect way for supporters to get together with friends, family and colleagues over a nice cuppa and chocolate treat while raising money to keep a family together when their child is seriously ill in hospital."

Emma's Big Chocolate Tea event will be held on Saturday 28 April between 12-3pm on 28 April at The Place, Pitsea, 13 Northlands Pavement, Basildon, SS13 3DU. All are welcome to come along and join for what promises to be a chocola-tea and fun-filled afternoon with a raffle, face painting, glitter tattoos, bouncy castle and more. Entrance is £1 on the door for adults and children under the age of 16 go free.

Media:











If you would like to get involved with Big Chocolate Tea, find out more and request a fundraising pack, visit: http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/bigchoctea

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