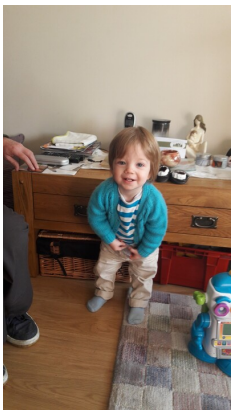
Grateful grandmother gives to charity who helped baby with mystery illness

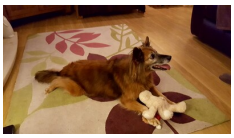
Thursday 30 November, 2017

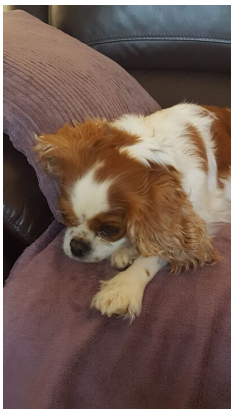
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A local lady, whose daughter and son-in-law were supported by The Sick Children's Trust when their three day old baby began coughing up blood, has raised £285 for the charity as thanks for its support.

Jeanne Cookson, from Burnley, offered dog-sitting services to busy puppy owners throughout the summer in return for a donation for The Sick Children's Trust and organised a fun-filled celebration party and raffle at a toddler group run at her local church to thank the charity for supporting her daughter Jen and husband Paul Colenutt.

At just three days old, Jeanne's grandson George was rushed to A&E at Wakefield's Pinderfields Hospital when he began coughing up blood in the back of his parents' car. Although the doctors were able to stabilise George, an immediate emergency transfer was arranged to Leeds General Infirmary (LGI). Mum Jen, 30, watched on helplessly as the ambulance was forced to stop during the journey to give her baby a blood transfusion.

George was met by the paediatric and surgical team at LGI and was raced into the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) for a further examination. Although doctors assumed he had a gastro-intestinal bleed, they were unable to pinpoint the location, and struggled to stop the bleeding. **Mum, Jen, who works alongside her husband, Paul, in the water industry, says:**

"By the time we arrived at LGI it was really late and we were allowed to stay a room just off the ward. Early the next morning, whilst we were with George, a nurse approached us and told us about The Sick Children's Trust and said that they could provide us with free accommodation literally 30 seconds away from the hospital entrance whilst our baby was being treated.

"Neither my husband nor I had any idea such a charity existed. We don't live far from LGI, but I couldn't imagine leaving my baby when he was so ill. I was also recovering from a caesarean, so the added stress and anxiety of being away from my son would have really taken its toll. Although doctors had stabilised George, no one knew where the bleeding was coming from. It was honestly the most distressing time of our lives.

"Stepping into Eckersley House felt like walking into a safe haven. Paul and I were exhausted – we went straight into the large kitchen with Jane, the House Manager, who showed us where we could make a cup of tea and immediately met other parents who were also being supported by the charity. I will never forget one lovely lady whose child was on the wards, she took one look at us and offered to make us breakfast, as all we had with us was instant noodles and she said we needed real sustenance!

"Eckersley House was brilliant. So many people we've told about it had no idea that The Sick Children's Trust even existed. I am so proud of my mum for raising such important awareness for the charity and for all the fundraising she has been doing. No words will ever be strong enough to thank the charity for how they looked after us, so as a family we will do our best to thank them in whatever way we can."

Jen and Paul stayed at Eckersley House, one of ten 'Homes from Home' run by The Sick Children's Trust, for over a week whilst George recovered. Although George's bleeding still remains a mystery, the doctors discovered that he had a condition called vesicoureteral reflux (VUR), which is the backward flow of urine from the bladder into the kidneys. Fortunately George recovered well from the bleed and has suffered no adverse effects from the VUR, although he continues to be monitored. **His Grandmother, Jeanne, who helps run her local church run toddler group, says:**

"When I went over to support Jen at LGI she showed me around Eckersley House. It is an amazing thing to be able to stay so close to your loved one and I thought everything was so well organised. It helped Jen to have some peace of mind and be strong for George. I knew I wanted to do something to give back to the charity because I can see how important it is for so many families with sick children.

"I had the idea to look after dogs in return for donations, because our own passed away a few years ago and we miss having dogs in our home. It was lovely to have different dogs staying with us over the summer, all with different personalities and now George is over a year old, he is really fascinated by them.

“The idea to fundraise at the toddler group came to me as it was the group’s 21st birthday and although we are a small group, I thought if we combined a party with a raffle, it would raise more money. I bought one of The Sick Children’s Trust’s teddies and we had a competition to name the bear, which was fun for the children. And I am already thinking about what more I can do to help the charity in the future.”

The Sick Children’s Trust supports around 4,000 families in its ten ‘Homes from Home’ every year – keeping families close to their seriously ill child’s bedside. **Jane McHale, Eckersley House Manager, says:**

“We are so grateful to George’s Grandmother, Jeanne, for taking the time to think about The Sick Children’s Trust and fundraise for us. To know that she saw how much we helped her daughter and Paul when George was ill touches all our hearts.

“It costs the charity £30 to support a family for one night in one of our ‘Homes from Home’ and we rely entirely on voluntary donations to do this, so Jeanne’s fundraising and spreading the word about our work will contribute to supporting lots of other families when they need a ‘Home from Home’.”

For further information about The Sick Children’s Trust, please visit http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/



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