Join in the chocola-tea fun to help families with sick children

Wednesday 2 March, 2016

Big Chocolate Tea is back, and better than ever. Join The Sick Children's Trust for the country's biggest annual fundraising event for chocolate, tea and baking lovers!

Big Chocolate Tea encourages people to host a tea party, cake sale or bake-off in the last week of April, and donate the proceeds to The Sick Children's Trust to support families with seriously ill children in hospital.

Last year the campaign raised a record £64,000, which provided 2,260 families with free 'Home from Home' accommodation while their child underwent lifesaving treatment in a hospital far from home. The charity hopes this year's campaign will be an even greater success.

The Sick Children's Trust provides families with free 'Home from Home' accommodation, as well as emotional and practical support, when their child is undergoing specialist treatment in hospital. The charity is calling for the nation to join in with Big Chocolate Tea so it can continue to help thousands of families across the UK stay together with their sick child.

Big Chocolate Tea will run from Friday 22 April to Monday 2 May, although supporters can hold an event at any point during the year. Participants are provided with a pack full of goodies to help host their event and asked to raise at least £30 – the cost of providing a room for a family for one night.

The campaign has a host of celebrity supporters, including Channel 5 Milkshake! Presenter Jen Pringle, B*Witched's Lindsay Armaou and Channel 5 weather presenter Sian Welby, who'll be joining in the chocola-tea fun as they meet families and staff in the charity's ten 'Homes from Home'. Great British Bake Off star John Whaite, celebrity chef Sam Stern and ITV's Lorraine Kelly's Cake Club Winner Suzy Pelta, amongst others, will also be supporting the campaign and sharing their top chocolate recipes.

Celebrity ambassador, Lindsay Armaou, says: “After a busy day, nothing beats catching up with my girlfriends over a cup of tea and a chocolate treat, and that's why Big Chocolate Tea is such a great campaign. No matter how you choose to support the campaign – be it a tea party, cake sale or cake competition – I know you'll have lots of fun. And even better, The Sick Children's Trust has a pack full of everything you need to get your event off to the perfect start. I'm thrilled to be supporting Big Chocolate Tea - you know you're having fun, but are keeping families together with their sick child at the same time. That's guilt-free chocolate at its best!”

2012 Great British Bake Off Winner John Whaite, says: “The Sick Children's Trust provides a brilliant service to the families of seriously ill children, and I am completely in awe of the hard work they do. I am honoured to be part of this wonderful campaign once again and support a truly vital charity. I hope my recipes will inspire lots of people to come together and hold a cake sale or bake-off at work, or at home, and help raise funds for the charity. I'm looking forward to seeing some chocolate showstoppers!”

The Sick Children's Trust runs ten 'Homes from Home' across the UK, providing families with free accommodation close to their child's hospital bedside. On average, it costs the charity around £30 a night to support one family in a 'Home from Home' which includes a private room, access to a kitchen, living room, laundry facilities and a playroom for siblings.

The Sick Children's Trust Chief Executive Jane Featherstone says: “Big Chocolate Tea is the charity's biggest fundraising campaign. Every year we're amazed at the enthusiasm and creativity of our supporters – and the wonderful chocolate baking creations they share!

“This year we have lots of recipes to inspire people and have made it easier than ever to get involved with an exclusive free Big Chocolate Tea pack. I know, with the public's support, we can ensure families can be there for their seriously ill child when it matters most.”

If you'd find out how you can get involved with Big Chocolate Tea, please email bigchoctea@sickchildrenstrust.org or visit www.sickchildrenstrust.org/bigchoctea/.

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