Littlefoot Playgroup Step Up To Raise Money For The Sick Children's Trust

Thursday 6 April, 2017

A local playgroup is joining in with The Sick Children's Trust's biggest and most chocola-tea fundraising campaign this month – Big Chocolate Tea.

Littlefoot playgroup, in Godmanchester, will be hosting a Big Chocolate Tea event and craft stall next month to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust to say thank you for supporting a family who attend the group.

In 2008, local mum Paula Williams gave birth to her first baby, Lydia, 11 weeks early. Lydia was kept in Hinchingbrooke Hospital for three months, but was rushed to Addenbrooke's Hospital for lifesaving treatment when she caught the lung infection bronchiolitis. For five days, parents Paula and Simon watched their tiny baby fight for her life on the intensive care unit before eventually being allowed to take her home. During this this time, the couple were able to stay just minutes from their seriously ill baby's side thanks to free 'Home from Home accommodation run by The Sick Children's Trust.

Eight years on, Lydia has made a full recovery and is now a big sister to 19 month old Juliet, who attends Littlefoot. Paula's friend, Amanda, who volunteers at the playgroup suggested they hold a Big Chocolate Tea party after learning that another family in the area had also been supported by the charity.
37-year-old full time mum, Paula who stayed at Acorn House, says:

"When we arrived at Addenbrooke's Hospital we were completely exhausted and so frightened. Lydia's life was in the hands of the doctors and we knew we had to prepare for the worst. For the next two weeks it was very touch and go. At one point, it was as if her little body had just given up, she wasn't responding at all.

"At a time like that, when all you can do is stand back and watch the doctors work on your baby, you need somewhere where you can clear your head and Acorn House was that place we could go. We were so lucky to have been supported by The Sick Children's Trust, it meant that we were just minutes from Lydia's bedside at all times. And we could get away from the busy and manic hospital, whether that was to eat a homemade meal or catch up with family who were visiting.

"Being given a free 'Home from Home' was one of the most incredible things we could' have received at such a traumatic time. Fortunately, Lydia did get better and we managed to get her home, but eight years on we haven't forgotten that so many other families could be going through something similar. So, when Amanda mentioned that the playgroup wanted to do a fundraiser for The Sick Children's Trust, I couldn't wait to get involved to help raise awareness and money for a charity that is so important."

Last year, Big Chocolate Tea raised £60,000 which gave 2,000 families free 'Home from Home' accommodation, keeping them together just minutes from their seriously ill child's bedside. The Sick Children's Trust hopes this year's campaign will be an even greater success. **Littlefoot volunteer, Amanda Last, says:**

"I've heard first-hand the difference The Sick Children's Trust has made to families going through the most unimaginable times with seriously ill children in hospital. And because of this we had to get the playgroup involved in Big Chocolate Tea. If we can raise at least £30, then we know we will be making a difference to one family by giving them a 'Home from Home' for one night."

The Sick Children's Trust runs free 'Home from Home' accommodation across the UK, supporting families with seriously ill children in hospital. While accommodation is provided free to families, it costs the charity £30 to support a family for one night. **Acorn and Chestnut House Manager, Abi Abdel-aal, says:**

"It's so wonderful to hear that The Sick Children's Trust has been able to support families who attend Littlefoot playgroup, and that because of this the community are supporting Big Chocolate Tea.

"Big Chocolate Tea is our biggest annual fundraising campaign and such a lot of fun. Individuals up and down the country will be taking part to support thousands of families, keeping them close to their seriously ill child while they undergo lifesaving treatment in hospital. We run two 'Homes from Home' in Cambridge, so by getting involved with Big Chocolate Tea this April and raising at least £30, you could

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support a family for one night who have a seriously ill child in Addenbrooke's or The Rosie Hospital."

Supporters can choose to take part in Big Chocolate Tea at any point during the year and will receive a free fundraising pack full of goodies to hold the perfect event. For more information and to request your pack, please visit: http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/bigchoctea.

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