Music legend John Miles becomes charity patron

Wednesday 5 May, 2021

Today is the international Cri du Chat Syndrome awareness day and the UK's leading charity, Cri du Chat Support Group, has officially announced that progressive rock music legend John Miles has become its patron. The musician, singer/songwriter and music director will become only the charity's second patron in the 30 years of providing support for those with, and families of those with, the rare genetic condition Cri du Chat Syndrome, including Miles' grandson Marcus.

Miles wrote his song *Angel* about his daughter Tanya in 1994 and released it in 2013 with the intention of raising awareness and funds for the support group. The royalties from the song, available on iTunes for just 79p, has helped over 300 families since then with grants towards specialist medical equipment, personal care assistants, respite and much more.

Cri du Chat Syndrome, a French term meaning "call of the cat", was first discovered by French paediatrician and geneticist Jérôme Lejeune in 1963 and occurs due to a random genetic partial deletion of chromosome 5. It can present itself from mild to severe mental, physical and learning difficulties and those with these additional needs often struggle with basic day to day activities with some even requiring round the clock care. It is estimated that only 1 in 50,000 people are born with this condition.

Support group Chairman Martin Roberts said, "having John [Miles] join us as a patron is a real honour and will excite our members and hopefully boost our aims in raising awareness about this condition". The 5th day of the 5th month has been adopted by groups around the world as it symbolises the 5th chromosome and is a day in which to celebrate the successes of those with Cri du Chat Syndrome. More information and to donate can be found at www.criduchat.org.uk.

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