Siblings get chocola-tea for charity in support of sick brother

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The brothers and sister of a little boy who is currently in hospital undergoing chemotherapy for an aggressive brain tumour have raised nearly £3,000 for The Sick Children's Trust – a charity which is keeping his Mum and Dad by his side.

Josh, Reece, George and Maddie Goodman, from Hevingham, held a Big Chocolate Tea party raising £2,850 to say thank you to the charity The Sick Children's Trust. The charity, which runs free 'Home from Home' accommodation, supported their parents Karen and Mark at Acorn House, Addenbrooke's Hospital, as their little brother Jay began his battle against cancer in intensive care.

Just two months ago, 17 month old Jay was perfectly healthy, but when he suddenly became ill with a suspected chest infection, his parents knew something wasn't right. Karen and Mark insisted on taking Jay to their local hospital, Norfolk and Norwich, where it was discovered that Jay had been living with a grade three brain tumour. That same night, Jay was transferred to Addenbrooke's in Cambridge for specialist treatment, and has been there ever since. Over the last couple of months, the brave boy has undergone five operations including brain surgery and has also started chemotherapy.

For ten days, his parents were able to remain by Jay's side because of Acorn House, run by The Sick Children's Trust. And during this time, family friend Jenny Burrell, from Aylsham, helped to look after his siblings, along with other members of the family. Currently, Jay is still in hospital undergoing treatment and his parents take it in turns to be with him, and stay at home with the other children. **Jenny, who organised the Big Chocolate Tea fundraising event with the children, says:**

"I've known Jay's Dad since we were children and our families are very close, my daughter Elisha is best friends with Josh and we are godparents to each others' children. So when Jay became poorly I said I would take care of his brothers and sister to help keep a bit of normality for them.

"There are a lot of hard conversations we've had with the children, and when they asked me how they could help Jay it was heart-breaking to say they couldn't. What I did say though was that we could help the people who are supporting their Mummy and Daddy. So we decided to join in The Sick Children's Trust' Big Chocolate Tea fundraising campaign and have a party. That way, the children could feel they were helping and doing something positive for their brother.

"The Sick Children's Trust relies entirely on voluntary donations, so every penny really does count.

As someone who's done a lot of different things for charity over the years I'd never come across The Sick Children's Trust, and I guess we all hoped we'd never have to. But it's such an important resource for parents in their hours of need. The Sick Children's Trust provides a safety net and a place of comfort for parents who unexpectedly need it. No-one plans for this kind of thing so it takes away some of the stress that comes with having a sick child."

Jay will continue to receive chemotherapy every two weeks for the next 14 months at Addenbrooke's Hospital. **Acorn House Manager, Sandra Peckham, says:**

"Jenny and the children have done a superb job with their Big Chocolate Tea fundraising! The money raised will ensure more families in similar circumstance will be able to stay together during such difficult times.

"Big Chocolate Tea is our biggest annual fundraiser which hopes to raise thousands of pounds to support families with sick children who need specialist treatment at our Cambridge hospitals. So, if you can get together with your friends, family or work colleagues and host a bake sale or chocola-tea party and raise £30, you will be making a difference to many families in need."

To find out more about Big Chocolate Tea, please visit http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/bigchoctea/.

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