Three Runs Down, Just Great North Run To Go For Supermum Hailee

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A Yorkshire Mum has completed three 10Ks and has set her sights on an even bigger challenge – the Great North Run - all in a bid to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust.

Seven years ago, Hailee Henderson, 33, gave birth to her baby girl Charlotte six weeks early at Darlington Memorial Hospital. Charlotte was born with a hole in her abdominal wall which meant her intestines were growing outside her body. At just a few hours old, she was rushed to the Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI) for emergency surgery.

Hailee and partner Nick were told that Charlotte could be at the RVI for five months – a hospital 100 miles away from their home in Dringhouses, York. Thankfully, the couple could stay with their daughter as they were supported by The Sick Children's Trust which offered them free 'Home from Home' accommodation at Crawford House, just minutes from Charlotte's bedside.

Hailee, who has already raised over £1,000 for the charity, says: "It was 24 hours before I got to meet my daughter - I didn't get to see Charlotte at all before she was taken to the RVI. I remember the drive there was awful. It took so long and it dawned on me I was going to have to do this twice a day, every day, and I just broke down. How could I leave my daughter on a ward fighting for her life every day? How could I be expected to leave her alone, all alone and scared without me there to tell her it was going to be OK?

"I knew she was receiving the best possible care but every little girl needs her mummy and daddy and she was just so, so, tiny. The first time I saw her she had tubes covering her body"

Fortunately, Hailee and Nick were offered a room at The Sick Children's Trust's Crawford House. Crawford House is one of ten 'Homes from Home' run by the charity. It is located on-site and has 23 family bedrooms all of which have a direct telephone line to the hospital wards, full laundry facilities and communal areas such as a living room, kitchen, playroom and a quiet room. **Hailee, who was supported by The Sick Children's Trust for two months, adds:**

"Crawford House had all the comforts of home while being able to be close to our daughter. There were many nights I couldn't sleep so I simply went and sat by Charlotte's bed holding her hand, stroking her head and just being there for her. This was the time we all needed to be together the most.

"If it wasn't for this charity we would've had to commute daily at a huge cost. Of course we would have done it but it would've been very difficult emotionally and physically as well as financially. Having a room took away so much worry, stress and heartache. We were able to focus on giving Charlotte all the help and support she needed.

"So, to thank The Sick Children's Trust, I decided to challenge myself this year – really challenge myself. I am not a natural runner and it doesn't come easily to me. I also had viral meningitis earlier this year which set me back in my training, but what keeps me going is thinking of what Charlotte had to go through as a baby. She fought like a trooper at only a few hours old, so I can fight any pain that running brings and raise money for a charity close to my heart."

The Sick Children's Trust supports over 4,000 families every year with free 'Home from Home' accommodation so that they can be close to their loved ones. **Crawford House Manager Gail Stonley says:**

"After all these years, its heart-warming to know that Hailee has done all these challenges for us, and is so determined to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust.

"It costs the charity around £30 to support a family in one of its 'Homes from Home' and we completely rely on our supporters and kind donors to continue our work. Hailee has already raised over £1,000 and will help many families who need a 'Home from Home'."

Hailee is one of 58 people who have chosen to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust by running the Great North Run. If you would like to support her, please visit:
https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Hailee-Henderson

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