



Charity number: 1123589



**The wonderful children we work with,
live less than a mile from you.
They don't have much to smile about...
...please help us change that.**

Dear **xxxx**

This is Charlie - one of the children we are helping at Solidarity Sports.

He grew up seeing his mum beaten black and blue by his violent father. This made him aggressive at school and he suffered from a very short attention span.

He was put on the Child Protection Register.

After years of abuse, Charlie's mother finally found the courage to leave his father. Life began to look up for Charlie - and his behaviour at school started to improve.

However, just as things were looking better for Charlie, he was hit with another hammer blow.

Charlie's mother died suddenly, leaving him without a parent.

He was unable to live with his father due to a court injunction. So, he moved in with his maternal grandmother.

She tried so hard to look after Charlie, but she struggled, as she was grieving herself and suffering from severe depression.

It's hard to imagine how Charlie was feeling. What had happened to him in his eight short years of life was heartbreaking.

I would like to tell you that it has all turned out OK for Charlie, but I'm afraid I can't. Due to what he has been through, Charlie is suffering from severe child-trauma.

He blames his grandma for his mother's death and regularly threatens to kill himself. He has fits of rage and attacks those closest to

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him, whilst his behaviour at school has deteriorated rapidly.

You can't bring Charlie's mum back and you can't solve all his problems, but you can help us to make his life better.

How? By supporting our work at Solidarity Sports.

Founded in 2007 - we are a charity that helps vulnerable children to turn their lives around through care, activity and sport. We work with some of the most disadvantaged children in the Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

These are children who self-harm. Children who suffer neglect. Children who have been bereaved - and children who have suffered physical and sexual abuse.

We give these children the love and attention they are so often missing - nurturing their confidence and helping them to enjoy life, rather than just exist.

We currently deliver after-school, weekend and school-holiday projects for our children. During the holidays, we spend 25 hours per week with our most vulnerable children.

But, in term time we only see these children for a maximum of six hours a week. We know that's not enough. These children desperately need us for much longer than that, as in many cases they are neglected at home and alienated at school.

That's why we need your help to launch our new Intensive Support Programme

This much-needed and vital programme will enable us to collect five of our most vulnerable children from school three times a week, to take them on outings and interact with them.

We will do things like playing in the park, visiting museums and helping them with homework. Things that most children take for granted, but not these kids. These three hours will also give crucial respite to the parents of these children, who are often struggling to cope with the pressures of life.

We devised this programme in the wake of a tragic event.

Just before February half-term this year, a parent attempted suicide. We spent every day during half-term with her three children, who were severely traumatised. This not only helped the kids cope, but also enabled their mum to get better. Here's what she texted us just ten days after we intervened:

"Listen I just wana say a big thank u to u I really appreciate it, it means a lot. This is a big help for me!!! Thanks".

However, if we had been able to provide more support, the attempted

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suicide may never have happened.

Incidents like this, are all too common, unfortunately.

But, they underline the fact that these children need a lot more attention than we can currently afford to give. That's why it is so vital to introduce the Intensive Support Programme.

What you can do to help

The Intensive Support Programme costs £5,000 per child, per year.

If you could partner with us and donate £5,000 to help Charlie or one of the four other children we have identified as being most at risk - it would be a massive help.

Each child would benefit from 114 trips and 342 hours of care in a year - and that's a level of support they desperately need.

We will also work with the children's parents to improve their relationship with their kids, as well as liaising with teachers to monitor progress.

We appreciate that £5,000 is a lot of money. But, we are only a small charity and every single penny of that money will go directly into helping a child.

Please believe me when I say it will make a *massive* difference.

Just read what Holly, a teacher at a local school, says about the programme:

"The programme will help children to cope with the stress and trauma that they are experiencing. Every child that will benefit is or has been at some point on the Child Protection Register. Without funding for this programme, I fear that these children will not receive the out-of-school support that they desperately need. This fantastic long-term programme is urgently required for our most vulnerable children."

Holly Williamson - Learning Mentor, St Cuthbert School, Kensington

We won't stop working hard to make sure that Charlie and the other kids have something to smile about.

We will do our utmost to stop them from being emotionally damaged forever. They need our help desperately.

We will not let them down. And, we are trying to spend as much time as we possibly can with them.

But just how much time we can spend, is really down to you. If you would consider becoming a sponsor, you would take a giant step in ensuring that our vital work can not only continue, but grow.

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You can give these wonderful children something to smile about.

In return for your support, we would like you to see first-hand, just how much difference you are making. We will update you three times a year on your sponsored child's progress - and invite you to join us on an outing.

We will also put your logo on our website with a link to your own site.

I don't expect you to donate £5,000 just on the strength of this letter. However, I hope what you have just read will have touched you enough to perhaps have a conversation.

I would welcome the opportunity of discussing sponsorship with you and tell you more about how you can make a difference to children living locally to you.

If this is of interest, please call me on **0207 376 0032** or email me at **sean@solidaritiesports.org**.

These children desperately need the support you can provide. Please, get in touch today - it would be lovely to hear from you.

With very best wishes

Signature here

Sean Mendez

Founder and Director, Solidarity Sports

P.S. I should add that Charlie isn't his real name. I changed it to protect his identity. His story, however, is all too real.