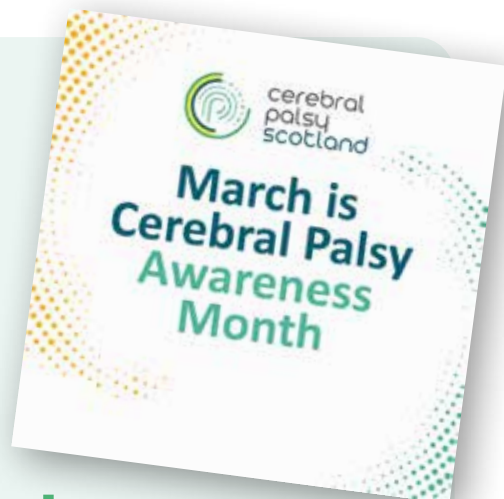


NEWSLETTER

March is Cerebral Palsy Awareness Month

Throughout the month, a team of volunteer content creators will be sharing their lived experience of cerebral palsy on our social media channels – talking about their day-to-day lives, and sharing tips and thoughts on what needs to change so that every person with cerebral palsy can achieve their potential.



Raise your voice during Cerebral Palsy Awareness Month

Be part of the change this March by sharing content from Cerebral Palsy Scotland on your own social media channels, or telling your own story.

Your school can take part by sharing our resources in a class session or assembly. For more information, contact us on **0141 352 5000** or email GetInvolved@cpscot.org.uk

“Now I’m pushing him more on different things. Now I know he’s capable of doing more himself.”

Every day at Cerebral Palsy Scotland, our team of specialist therapists are working together with people with cerebral palsy and their families – like Jack and Amanda – to help them reach their potential.

“ Jack is the happiest boy ever. He is very intelligent, very cheeky. He absolutely loves films, especially Disney films. He’s just amazing.

Jack’s 11 now. He was born nine weeks premature. He wasn’t diagnosed with cerebral palsy until he was two years old and that came as a real shock to us. I was a young mum and didn’t have much experience of babies. When he wasn’t hitting his milestones we put it down to him being born early. No one had told us that he might have a disability until his diagnosis.

Continues... 





Jack isn't able to sit or stand independently. He has good control of his left arm, sometimes his right arm. So he needs us day to day for things like dressing, help with eating and drinking and getting into his wheelchair using his hoist.

It was Jack's Occupational Therapist that referred us to Cerebral Palsy Scotland, and we had about eight sessions near to where we live in West Lothian.

The therapists, Petra and Claire, were fantastic. They're so good at their jobs. During appointments Jack can often be bored, like he's in another world. But as soon as he went in, the therapists were so focused on him. They were talking to him, rather than talking to me. Getting him interested was most important, then the physical stuff came afterwards. Some of the stuff we were working on was quite painful, but he didn't mind so much because he was having so much fun.

Jack loves films, so over the sessions we made a film using

Lego figures and Jack came up with the ideas for the plot and the characters. Through that we worked on different stretches he can do, to help his tight muscles. Jack was making the film, but he was reaching, bending down, picking up the figures, moving them. Learning about the different stretches he can do has really, really helped us.

We also looked at getting Jack more involved with his dressing. Before, I would take Jack's top off because I didn't think he could do it himself. But Petra and Claire showed me how to get him involved and the techniques to do that. It made me realise I can say, "Jack, you can do this" and egg him on a bit.

We also worked a little on Jack's speech. Jack learnt he can take a big breath before he starts a sentence. That was something we had never been shown before and it's made such an improvement to his speech.

A lovely memory for me from the sessions was seeing him standing up, with Petra supporting him. I hadn't seen him standing out of his standing frame before; he's just so tall and you're not used to that. Jack's dad and his younger brother George came to one of the sessions to see Jack standing up too. That was very emotional for me.

I think, if we hadn't come to the sessions, I would still be taking over a bit more. Whereas now, I'm pushing him more on different things. Now I know he's capable of doing more himself.

It was so humbling to see him happy doing physio. Having his body getting put through all that work but he's actually having fun, and actually looking forward to coming to the sessions. It was lovely to see."

Jack came to sessions at Cerebral Palsy Scotland through our Better Start programme. Thanks to the National Lottery Community Fund for funding this work.

Developing our psychology support service



Kirstie Rees, our Chartered Psychologist, has been working alongside the therapy team, providing support and consultation for mental health, and creating useful resources for children, young people and adults with cerebral palsy.

New resource: Talking to your child about cerebral palsy

Kirstie has produced a leaflet, 'Talking to your child about cerebral palsy'. This new resource is aimed at parents, and includes advice about how to talk to your child about their diagnosis of cerebral palsy, as well as some helpful approaches that you can use to change negative thinking patterns and reduce anxiety levels.

You can access this leaflet on our website: cerebralpalsyScotland.org.uk



Sign up for CP Circles parents' programme - virtual introduction session

Thursday 21 March, 12-1pm

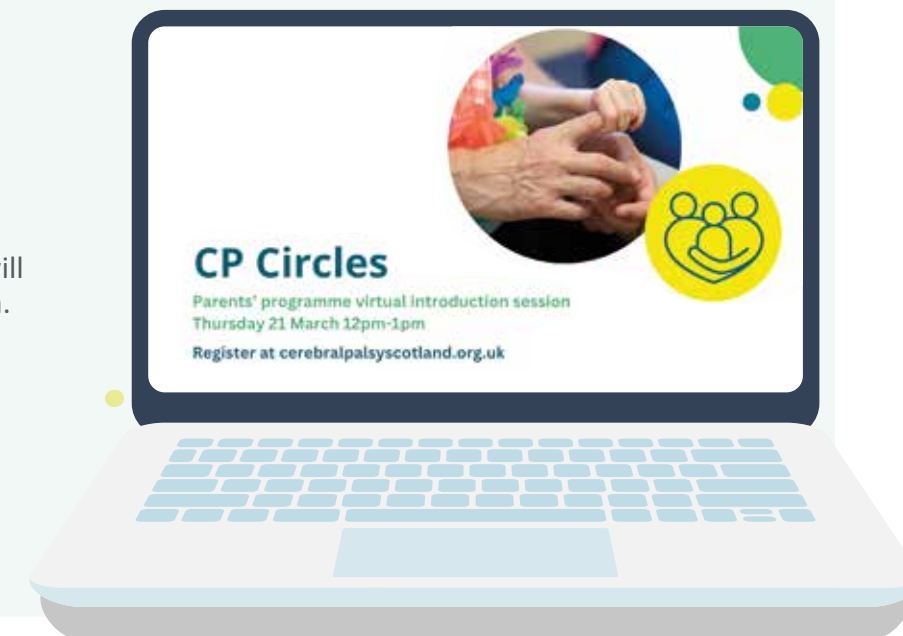
In this virtual session we will explore our new programme for parents of children with cerebral palsy, delivered by our Chartered Psychologist, Kirstie Rees.

We are currently developing a parents' programme that will focus on the many different aspects of parenting a child with cerebral palsy. This programme will include several group sessions and will begin at the end of April.

This introductory session aims to provide an initial insight into the programme. Additionally, we would like to hear your views to ensure that the content and structure of future sessions are based on your needs.

This virtual session is free to attend and will take place on Thursday 21 March, 12-1pm. It is best suited to parents or guardians of children with cerebral palsy aged 4-12 years.

To register, please contact: info@cpscot.org.uk



Your donations make a difference

Last year we took part in the Big Give Christmas Challenge, asking supporters to raise funds for our specialist therapy service.

We are delighted that your donations helped us exceed our target of **£15,000** in just seven days. Plus, thanks to kind donors who doubled every donation made, we raised a total of **£32,435** for our therapy service.

Therapy is the key to unlocking potential. Every day, our therapists work alongside people with cerebral palsy, their families and carers, helping them develop practical skills which transform daily life.

Watch the video to see how our specialist therapists at Cerebral Palsy Scotland will now be able to support more people with cerebral palsy – like Jack and Karen – to thrive.



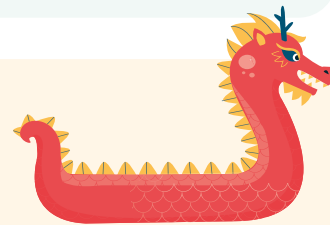
£32,435



Watch video here



Join our Dragon Boat race day on 2 June



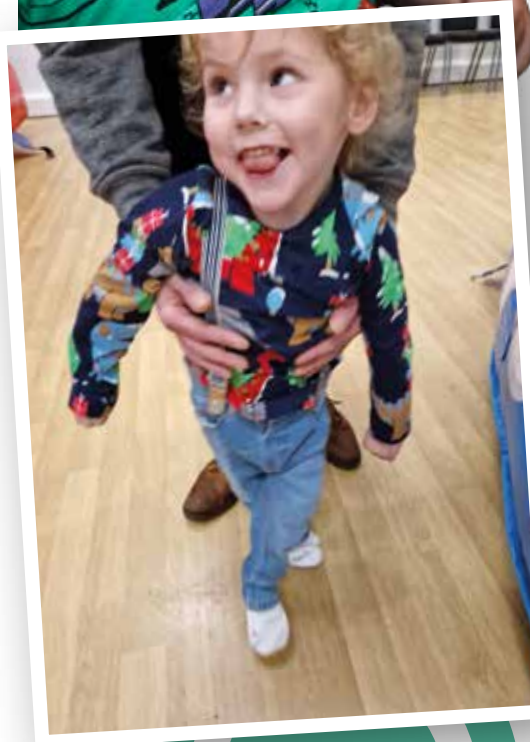
Our annual Dragon Boat race day for Cerebral Palsy Scotland is a fun-filled water sports competition - no experience is needed to take part.

This event is ideal for companies or a groups of friends. Race against other teams in special Dragon Boats which have their origins in ancient China. Will you be the team that can work your way through the heats and emerge as the overall winner?

To find out more and register, visit our website or contact Millicent on **0141 352 5000** or GetInvolved@cpscot.org.uk



Since coming to Cerebral Palsy Scotland, Dixon's sitting and standing has improved and he is finding different ways to play and communicate with his family. His mum Stef, talks about the impact the therapy sessions have had on his day-to-day life.



“ Dixon is three years old. He's just the happiest, cheekiest little boy. He loves going to nursery, and playing football in his walker. He has a 13 year old half-sister and a younger brother and they love to play and dance and hug together.

Dixon's cerebral palsy affects his movement, so he uses a walker to move around. His hands are often clenched, so that can affect how he plays with toys and things like eating. His speech is also a bit affected too.

Our local physio referred us to Cerebral Palsy Scotland, and we had some therapy sessions with Lesley and Sandra in Dunfermline and Kirkcaldy. Dixon can sometimes find it hard at appointments but he really enjoyed himself. The therapists were lovely.

In the sessions we worked a lot on his sitting and standing. I was shown different ways to get him sitting upright on the floor, with his legs at the side and not in front of him. I felt that after the sessions he was sitting a lot better, and for longer.

Since the sessions I've got a couple of different benches to use at home. He uses one for sitting and the other one he leans on to help him stand unaided. So we do that now as well as using his standing frame, and he's standing for a bit longer now too.




I also learnt some new ways to help improve his movement when he goes from sitting down to standing up, so he isn't using his tone, and also a good way to get him into his buggy.

We were also shown ways to get him using his hands more, like getting him to flip the pages over in a book, or knocking down bricks. Plus, we looked at how he could use his hands to press switch buttons as part of a game.

As well as that, we looked at different ways to help Dixon with his communication and to help him make choices. We used flash cards and sheets with symbols on them for 'like', 'don't like', 'more', 'again' and different games and songs.

So now we'll play together with them at home and Dixon can point to the symbols and he'll pick songs for us to sing using the symbols, which he really enjoys. His communication is coming on a lot more now too.”

Thanks to your fundraising and donations, we are able to support more adults with cerebral palsy in Scotland make the most of their abilities.



Last year, we worked with staff at a care home, to help ensure that one of their residents was moving and participating in activities to the best of his abilities.

To ensure privacy, we have changed the name of the person that we supported.

“ My name’s Kelly and I work at the Real Life Options Longcroft care home in Bonnybridge. It’s a small, homely care home for people with learning and physical disabilities.

One of the gentlemen who lives here, Jim, is in his mid-fifties and has cerebral palsy and learning disabilities. He is very outgoing and sociable - he loves interacting with everyone who lives and works here. Jim likes to play games, especially jigsaw puzzles and playing with a ball, and he loves drawing and colouring.

Jim is a full-time wheelchair user. With a bit of support from staff, he is able to do a lot of things for himself.

We first heard of Cerebral Palsy Scotland through the District Nursing team. We got in touch as we felt we needed some specialist support on improving

Jim’s posture and to make sure we were doing everything we could to help him.

Lesley and Sandra from Cerebral Palsy Scotland came to the care home over a few sessions. We worked a lot on ways we could best position him in his chair and bed, by adding cushions and pads. This helped his posture and allowed him to move to the best of his ability.

We also looked at how Jim could be doing more therapy within the activities he already enjoys – working on ideas to challenge him, so he is more active and using his body more.

We worked on ways to encourage him to reach and stretch when he’s drawing, as well as pushing and lifting using a gym ball, or holding and pulling stretchy toys. It’s nice as the exercises also get him interacting with other people, which he loves.

The sessions were really worthwhile and positive for Jim and the staff here. We learnt new things and it gave us confidence. The techniques have helped Jim’s posture and movement and also helped him to interact and participate more with the staff and the other residents - he has gotten a real boost from that.”



Information and advice – how we can help

As well as our therapy services for children and adults, we offer information and advice on cerebral palsy in different ways.

Cerebral Palsy Support Coordinator



If you want to find out about services or organisations that can support you, have a challenge that you’re not sure how to tackle, or are simply looking for a listening ear, get in touch with Joanna Healy, our Cerebral Palsy Support Coordinator.

Joanna’s role is to listen, understand and link you to a specialist person, service, or organisation that can help or support you going forward.

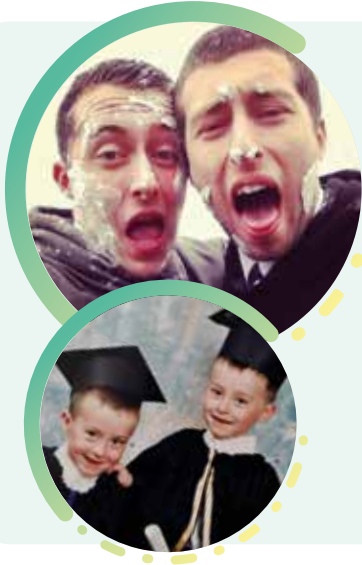
To get in touch call **0141 352 5000** or email info@cpscot.org.uk

Online information and advice

Our website has a range of information and advice to support parents and carers, including:

- General information about cerebral palsy.
- A support directory that puts you in touch with organisations and places that can help people with cerebral palsy and their families in Scotland.
- Blogs and advice from people with lived experience of cerebral palsy.





Become our Friend

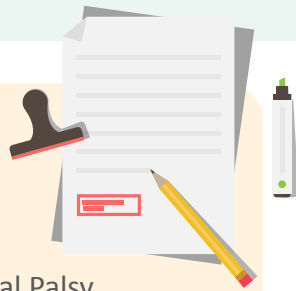
Join us on our mission to improve the lives of children and adults with cerebral palsy in Scotland.

As a Friend of Cerebral Palsy Scotland your regular donation will provide vital physical and emotional support so that every person with cerebral palsy in Scotland can reach their full potential.

Scan here for more information:



Leaving a gift in your Will



By choosing to leave Cerebral Palsy Scotland a gift in your Will, you are making sure that support for children and adults with cerebral palsy will continue to be there.

Our charity partners Thomas Bradley & Co. offer supporters of Cerebral Palsy Scotland wills from £99+VAT and a free Will service for over 50s.

To book an appointment call **0330 390 9200** or email: info@thomasbradleylegal.co.uk.

Thank you!

A big thank you to all our supporters who have donated to us. We would also like to thank our incredible **#TeamCPScot** fundraisers who go above and beyond to power our work. Special thanks to John Stein, Gillian Scott, Katrina Parsons, Jo MacMonagle and Team Bailey, and Mark Graham.



The unwavering support of all our donors is vital in enabling us to provide support for people with cerebral palsy and their families. Over 85% of our income comes from fundraising and without your help it is impossible to ensure that support, information and therapy are available for children and adults with cerebral palsy throughout Scotland.

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