



In our first newsletter of 2019, we share stories from The Footsteps Centre and ways that you might be able to help out.

Tiny toddler twins in training

The Johnston Twins, Lucy and Mathew, were just under two when they came for their first Footsteps session in January. It is great for children to come for therapy as early as they can, so we were happy to see the two cute little toddlers, who have CP, come for physiotherapy with us.

Little Matthew even managed to have a go in the spider as although we thought he was too small for this initially at the assessment, Aga worked her magic and he thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from it, according to mum, Nicola.

Since attending, Nicola has noticed the difference in the twin's physical abilities: "Lucy's sitting and right hand grip is so much more improved and Matthew's legs are much stronger especially when climbing stairs with assistance. We are hoping that with continuous therapy these will develop further to get to the desired goals"



Director Filip said: "Mathew and Lucy both did really well in therapy for such young children on their first session. We have to incorporate lots of play and games as little ones don't always understand complex instructions – so we use lots of toys and stories and then they are moving and following instructions as part of a game and they don't even know they are having therapy!"

Nicola told us: "Finding out one of your children has cerebral palsy is a terrible blow but to be dealt the card of having them both with this disease is something unheard of. However, we as a family are strong and determined and with the support of our family and friends we are pushing all boundaries to get Matthew and Lucy the help they need to live a life they deserve - Footsteps is an establishment full of amazing people and equipment, that provides hope for

Matthew and Lucy"

Mathew and Lucy will be coming for lots of therapy this year to build on what they achieved in their first session, so we look forward to seeing the little ones back again soon.

Up for a challenge in 2019?

Are you thinking of taking on a challenge in 2019? From 5k fun-runs, road bike races, to all-night treks there are so many different events out there it can be hard to decide on one. If you would like to get fit, have fun and raise some funds for Footsteps at the same time, why not head over to our [Updated Charity Challenge Event Page](#) and get some ideas? We have examples of great 2019 events in cycling, walking and running coming up later this year. You can usually just register and raise as much as you feel comfortable with – no minimum commitments – and feel great about helping children take their first footsteps while you train. Alternatively, if you have a small group of friends or colleagues who might be interested, chat to sarah@footstepsfoundation.com and we may be able to buy some charity places for upcoming events for you. We provide lots of support, publicity and fundraising advice, as well as a Footsteps T-Shirt for all our brilliant event participants.



GOOD LUCK ON THE 28TH OF APRIL TO OUR TWO AMAZING LONDON MARATHON RUNNERS ELLIOT AND HAYLEY - RUNNING TO RAISE MONEY FOR DISABLED CHILDREN AT FOOTSTEPS

Welcome to our new physiotherapist



HPCP registered physiotherapist Anna Matukiewicz has joined the Footsteps team this month. Anna was working at the Centre for Early Intervention in Lezno, Poland, before coming over to the UK and working as a physio in Southampton.

The centre in Lezno is a public provision for children with similar conditions as we see here at Footsteps. As suggested by the name, they specialise in supporting very young children.

Anna told us: “In Lezno I worked with lots of little babies, tiny and premature. We did lots of physio with them – I guess you could call this very early intervention. In Poland it is very popular, parents know how important this is. I enjoy working with little ones and have experience working with really small babies. I have 5 years of physiotherapy degree training (master level & postgraduate soft tissue manual therapy & PNF) and have also completed training in sensory integration. I am really happy to have joined the Footsteps Team.

Outside of work, I love going to the gym - especially spinning and body combat. I have a little shih tzu dog Rutti who is 8 years old, so I love to walk him, and my husband and I take him everywhere we can. We also love the Caribbean...Havana is a favourite and parts remind me of communist-era Poland (with better weather), but we have to leave Rutti at home when we go there!”

Cory's Footsteps

Cory, aged 8, has been coming to Footsteps for a year now, and has had four sessions. We chatted to his mum Emma about their experiences:

Tell us about what brought you to Footsteps:

“When he was diagnosed with cerebral palsy as a little boy, his prognosis was bleak. We were warned that he would never walk, sit or talk. Throughout my journey of finding the best support for Cory, I have tried a lot of different therapies and you get to know what works quite quickly – with Footsteps we knew straight away. We drive from Wales, and have to pay for accommodation in the area, but you do what you have got to do”



What improvements, if any, have you noticed since coming to Footsteps?

“Cory’s stability is much better and transferring between positions. The other day he tried to take his first steps! London Orthotics, where he goes for fittings for his splints – they noticed the difference right away and were impressed with the improvement in a year! 2 years ago we went for a power wheelchair as I had given up any chance of him walking – now I have hope! He wasn’t supposed to even sit up by himself and now he’s walking along with a rollator!”

What do you do in between Footsteps Sessions?

“I also see the improvements at home after a session. Him being able to transfer his own weight from wheelchair and sitting has saved my back. I used to have constant back pain – that’s gone now. We are a very proactive family – Cory loves the TV but we try and keep him busy in other ways. My husband does therapy with him at home with parallel bars and a rollator whenever he can and we want him to join in whatever we do. We are really outdoorsy and even took him to the summit of Pen Y Fan”

Does Cory enjoy the sessions here? Cory is non-verbal but I know him – he enjoys the sessions! He is happiest on his feet, so even though he can’t talk I know he is happy and heading towards fulfilling his dream.

Sum up Footsteps for us in a sentence: “Wish I’d found it earlier!”

Head over to our [facebook page](#) page to see a video of clever Cory up on his feet and walking...



Our fanatstic supporters...

Our regular donors help us in our essential work and we are very grateful to all who support us in this way. Could you consider becoming a regular donor to help children like Lucy, Matthew and Cory?

A huge thanks to...

James Gesner; Andy Baker & Play 2 Give; The Helianthus Trust; Meetings Industry Meeting Needs; The Angus Lawson Memorial Trust; The Alchemy Foundation; Hadden Hill Golf Club Seniors; Karen Rivers & Infineum; Reading Rotary Club and The Edward Gostling Foundation.

Thanks for your ongoing support,

The Footsteps & Foundation Team.