

# VISION

April 2019

**“ The heart of a volunteer  
is not measured in size,  
but by the depth of the  
commitment to make a  
difference in the lives of  
others.”**

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*To cure, sometimes; To help, often; To comfort, always.*



**“Volunteers and supporters are just ordinary people with extraordinary hearts. They offer the gift of their time to teach, to listen, to help, to inspire, to build, to grow, to learn. They expect no pay, yet the value of their work knows no limit..... They’ve known the unexpected joy of a simple hug. They’ve planted tiny seeds of love in countless lives. Volunteers are just ordinary people who reach out and take a hand and together make a difference that lasts a lifetime”**

**30**



## **30 Years of good deeds**

Within days of the Romanian Revolution news of which gripped the world, just before the celebration of Christmas 1989, Dr John Walmsley, the vicar of

St Laurence Barkingside felt inspired to gather humanitarian aid to help the people and particularly the infants and children of Romania. In December 1989 convoys of aid led to the setup of Romanian Children’s Aid, by hosts of dedicated volunteers, nurses and carers, the building of the first hospice dedicated to infants and children with HIV or living with AIDS and ultimately led to the creation of Children in Distress.

With its mission “To cure, sometimes; To help, often; To comfort, always “ Children in Distress today cares for thousands of children in its hospices, child development centres, school for children with autism and their associated community based services and social welfare programs.

The work of the charity is made possible in the main only with the help and support of thousands of donors throughout the UK and Ireland.

Over the years hundreds of volunteers shared their commitment and expertise

improving the child development, educational, physiotherapy and professional training opportunities the charity offered. They also made possible the ever improving palliative, respite end of life care services that form the basis of the charity mission of care.

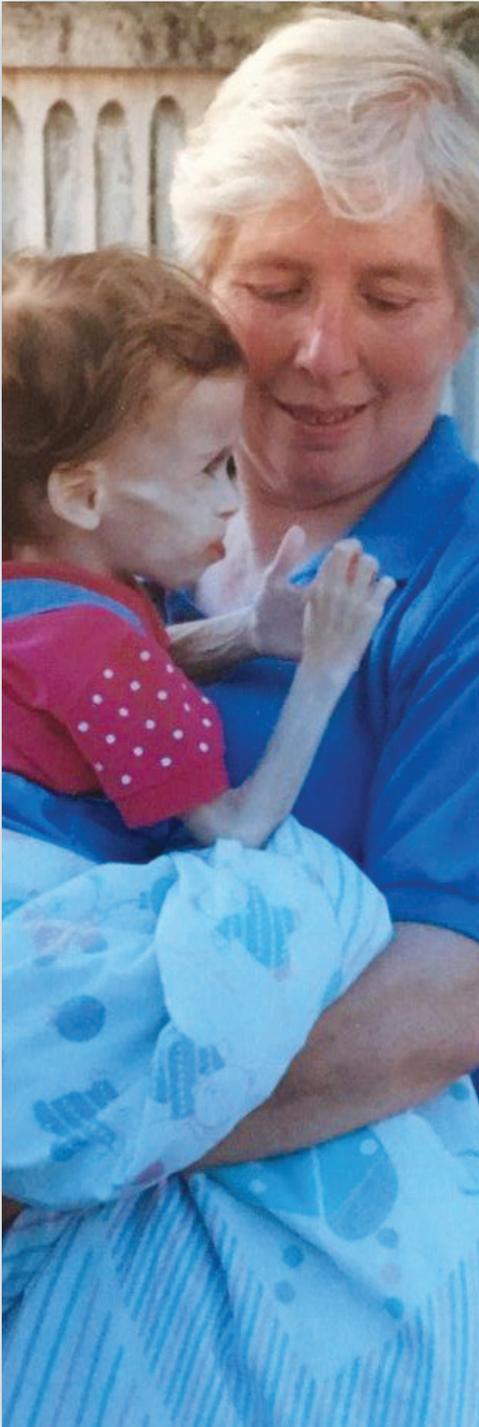
In this year Children in Distress celebrates 30 years of activity, of commitment and care and on this occasion we would like to organize several joint events in Romania and UK.

All the members of our family of support, child sponsors, long-term and new supporters and above all those volunteers who made our work possible from the very beginning are invited to consider joining our Anniversary Celebrations

30 years of good deeds would not have been achieved if countless volunteers and supporters did not dedicate their time, experience, and love to our vision: to create a better today for children who may have no tomorrow.

Starting with this number of Vision, we will talk about them too;

### **Our Unsung Heroes**



**Rev. June Hurn**

**Is one of our first volunteers, Trustee of CID UK, inspires us through her dedication to the children in our centres**

I met The Rev. Dr. John Walmsley in 1992 and he invited me to work as a volunteer carer at St. Lawrence Children's Hospice in Cernavoda for the month of October 1993. At the time, I was an Ordained Deacon in the Church of England, a mother, grandmother and retired Physical Education Teacher specialising in children with Special Needs, all of which proved valuable when looking after the children and other volunteers. The work was hard, some of the children were very sick,

# Our Unsung Heroes

two died in that month. I took two funerals on the windy hillside cemetery overlooking the town. In spite of all the difficulties, my lasting memory of St. Lawrence was a place of love and happiness. Many of the children were well enough to run around and play, enjoying their freedom, enjoying their food and especially enjoying the love and care of the devoted band of volunteers, nurses and ordinary mums from all corners of the UK. We all responded the love that the children gave to us too. I was concerned for the children who, because of disabilities other than HIV, were mostly lying in their cots and not able to join with the others unless someone carried them. It is so important to engage with the world from an upright position. Wheelchairs were the answer and I knew that there were lots of chairs that children in the UK had grown out of, which would help. The task was to find the wheelchairs and get them out to Romania until two years ago when they became available

in the country. Later, there were children at St. Margaret's, St. Christopher's, and St. Andrew's who needed wheelchairs.

Over the years, so many people have helped to provide wheelchairs. The congregation of St. Nicholas Church Chislehurst, where I serve, have given money for new chairs; many individuals have donated their old chairs. Physiotherapist friends have advised, and one, Mary Bailey, has travelled to Romania many times, to help the carers learn the best way for the children to be seated in their chairs. Kent Mobility have always let us have used specialist chairs and adapted others for particular needs. The people at St. Lawrence, Blackmore have supported us from the beginning. There are so many goodhearted people who have cared and done whatever they could to help that I am forever grateful for the support that they, and my husband, Bruce, have given me.

## Mrs. Jenny Dodd

Jenny has been a supporter since the early 1990s at St, Lawrence Church, Blackmore in Essex. She, with other members of the congregation, have collected goods to send to Romania, raised lots of money through Church Fairs and general giving, and child sponsorship ,( Jenny sponsored Florin and Andreea for years, always remembering their birthdays and Christmas with special gifts). She has collected masses of knitted clothes and blankets and continues to do so. She is the enthusiastic guiding light continually bringing CID to the attention of her Church and the Village.

We have from Jenny a photograph with church members who are involved with our fundraising work for Children in Distress. Their names are set out below in the order that they appear on the photo.

In addition to the people on the photo two ladies, Sylvia Wood and Angela Moody, knit large amounts of clothing for the children and often include hand knitted toys and other items.

We hold one large fundraising event on alternate years. During the summer months from May to September the Church holds a 'Teas in the Tower' entertainment event on a Sunday afternoons, and for the past two years we have had a bring and buy sales table on the first Sunday of the month at that event to raise money for CID. We also have donation boxes. The Priory Church of St. Lawrence has been supporting CID for more than 27 years and are proud to regularly sponsor two children as part of our Support.



Back Row left to right: Anthea Gray, John Hughes, Rev. Sam Brazier- Gibb.  
Front Row left to right: Brenda Leigh, Jenny Dodd, Merrilyn Knowles, Peter Mason, Margaret Laing, Jill Mason

## Miss Janet Bonner

Janet has been a supporter of CID since the early 1990s. She has been a child sponsor for many years, more recently for Raffy as she too has problems with her sight. She regularly makes donations and encourages me in what I do.

## Miss Mary Bailey



Mary visited the centres in Romania frequently. She was with me when we brought Alexandru his first wheelchair at St. Christophers in Curtea de Arges. After that we brought one for Madalin.

She advised the physiotherapists and the carers about seating, feeding and handling the children.

She continues to be a supporter of CID.

# Happy Easter!

## The Rector, the Treasurer and the congregation of St. Nicholas Church



Since 1993, St. Nicholas has supported CID and the work that I have been able to do in Romania. They have sent annual donations from money raised at the Christmas Fair. Many of the congregation have sponsored children and have given money to buy new wheelchairs whenever there was a particular need. They helped fill lorries with all sorts of goods to send to Cernavoda in the early days. They continue to keep in touch through Vision and talks that I give about the children and the centres. I cannot overstate how much everyone's support has meant to me.

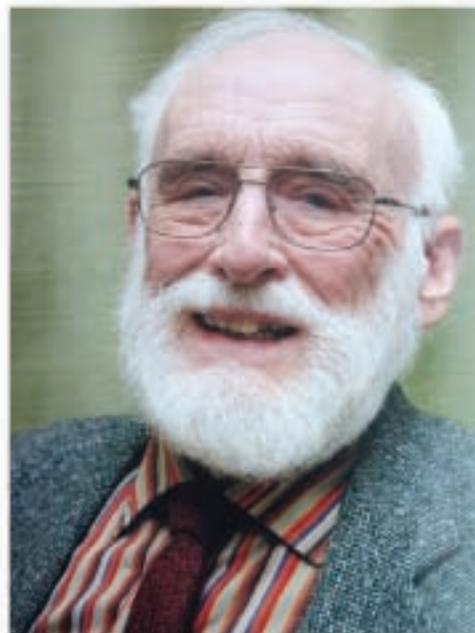
## The Reverend Heather

Since 1992 when Heather first met The Rev. Dr. John Walmesley, she has been a supporter of CID. He came to speak to a group that she and I were tutoring and from that moment we were involved. She has encouraged every Church where she has served to support CID and thus has raised money. She has been to Romania to see for herself the work with the children. She has sponsored different children and has collected and sent lots of knitted goods. She continues to keep in touch and support in any way she can.

## The Reverend Jim and Mrs. Nancy Pratt, Connecticut, USA

They have been supporting CID with donations for the last 15 years while they were living in England. They are now back in America but are still interested in the work in Romania.

## Mr. Bruce Hurn



Bruce has supported me and CID from 1993 when I first went to Romania for a month. It has meant looking after himself and our household, family, dogs and cats etc. while I have been away, sometimes two, three or four times a year. It would not have been possible without his help and encouragement. As an Artist, he has often sold paintings and given the proceeds to CID, asking the purchaser to send the cheque direct to CID. He has visited the centres in Romania and was present at the opening of the centre in Albania. He definitely qualifies as a Long Time Supporter

For those who cannot attend the Thanksgiving Tour in Romania on the 21st of September we will organize a **Thanksgiving service in London**

From 11.00 – 14.00 hours at Romanian Orthodox Parish of St. George the Great Martyr

The service will be presided over by Father Constantin Popescu and Rev. June Hurn will do the Anglican prayer of thanksgiving.

St. Dunstan's in West Church  
186, Fleet Street, London  
(nearest tube Temple- Chancery Lane)

# Guisborough shop' marvellous helpers



Cida and Stan Jackson and Cilla Hurst on the right

One of the many things as a charity we can be proud of is our loyal and dedicated supporters. Guisborough charity shop perfectly illustrates this. For the last six years the shop was managed by Tracy England who has been able to combine her retail expertise with a rewarding job as she states "I love my job as I like to feel I make a difference". And she does! Tracy is also to be found helping out at various events and is an integral part of the Shoebox team; she even ropes in her volunteers to help on the busy Shoebox dispatch day!

When mentioning loyal and dedicated volunteers, Guisborough shop have the embodiment of them:

Ceda and Stan Jackson, Cilla Hurst, Jennifer Angel-Gill, Tom Pryde and little Tom. Ceda has been volunteering from the shop

opening and both Ceda and Stan have been to Romania on numerous occasions and even called into St Margaret's on a detour whilst on a European cruise! They are great ambassadors and have sponsored children and always go the extra mile to help Tracy and their love of helping their own community shines through. Cilla is the most remarkable nearly 92 year old (ssh!) as up until recently she regularly volunteered four days a week and even when cutting her hours back she still does at least two and is always on standby to offer cover! Cilla takes personal responsibility over providing the Christmas goody bags provided when Father Christmas calls and takes great pleasure in also making a difference to local children whilst helping those in Romania at the same time.

Tom Pryde has volunteered for Children in Distress for around 10 years and provides a warm welcome to all and his terrific sense of humour and he's recently been renamed as Guisborough's answer to Ant and Dec as Tom Tom with Tom .

Little Tom is remarkable for the fact he is our youngest regular volunteer (that we know off .... So please write in if you know of anyone younger!) who is a full-time student at the local college studying Health & Business and he calls in everyday to see if he can lend a hand (as well as doing shifts around his lessons!)



Little Tom is such a focused, motivated individual with great customer service skills and always the first to run and lend a hand when he sees the Children in Distress van approaching, he knows it's likely to be filled to brim as they always try and sell anything .

Tracy is also supported by other volunteers who help make up the Guisborough team whom she would also like to thank (and warn them that they also may one day be asked to appear in Vision!) As Tracy says "I'd like to say a massive thank you as they are a vital to our success and without them the shop could not run"

Please consider volunteering if you live local to one of our shops Guisborough, Kirbymoorside or Shildon either pop in and speak to one of our branch managers or contact Caroline Wilkie on 07775695611 we will always welcome you and remember you are never too old or too young to make a difference. It's what our charity is all about .

# The incredible Rev. Pev



hands” and noted how powerful his words were to think “nearly 30 years and I can remember them and still involved with the charity”. Paul recalls the years when the traditional harvest festivals were replaced with donations for our charity with products like disposable nappies replacing potatoes and baby lotions instead of apples... and lovely the church smelt as a result!

Paul has shared our journey recalling the collections from Christenings and weddings donated to us (again often helped by a special

Certain places you visit touch your soul and instantly feel like a place you could call home; the community spirit is palpable and one such place is Great Ayton, North Yorkshire. The heart of this community is the Reverend Paul Peverell, aka Rev the Pev to his parishioners in Great Ayton, Easy and Newton under Roseberry. A legend in his local area or his unique way of spreading love an magic with his puppets, and a legend for our charity by being an ambassador for the last 28 years.

Paul was (like so many others) moved beyond words after hearing Dr John Walmsley preach he refers to him as “a terrific speaker” who “had everyone in the palms of his



Christ, Church, Great Ayton

puppet!) the sponsored children providing the congregation with a true personal link (perhaps add link to sponsoring a child?) the way over the years they have mirrored and contrasted our Shoebox campaigns with local images to illustrate the help needed in Romania. If you have a minute google Paul’s mission of “trying to start a Mexican wave of goodwill” by conducting a ten pounds charity challenge in his local community and you will understand further what a remarkable and inspirational man he is.

Like many of our supporting churches our “Love in a Box” Shoebox campaign is a fixed



part of their annual calendar and Rev the Pev (and his Father Christmas puppet) is a familiar face in many local schools helping to boost our shoebox campaign enormously. The local pub The Royal Oak even offer a free coffee and mince pie to all who drop off a box there! The church community ensures it extends and spreads Christmas spirit throughout the area with members of the congregation involving their workplaces and spreading the word about what we do. A big thank you to all that do this .... And please feel free to email your stories as we’d love to hear from you.

Paul describes the beginning of our charity as like watching “history in the making” and the haunting traumatic reality of Romania being counteracted by the knowledge our charity was and is making a big difference. As Paul so eloquently put it St Laurence’s has evolved from a place to help our children die with dignity to a place for them to life with aspirations. That’s evolution at it’s best. Paul concludes that it’s for many reasons he’s still so involved with our charity, he loves the personal contact we provide and the regular updates on how the funds are being used but the other big selling point is that when asked “how do you know the shoeboxes are given to the “right” people?” He can answer “I know Father Christmas (and many of his elves!)” It was this that helped us recruit our amazing warehouse team as apparently it was said “if you don’t volunteer, I’ll cancel Christmas!” and it’s this sense of humour, big heart and love of humanity that makes his parishioners (and us as a charity) so blessed to have the incredible Rev Pev as one of our supporters.

# People who made the difference too!

## Miss Morag McIlwraith



Morag has been a supporter of CID for over 22 years. To begin with Morag helped out with shoe boxes through her local church and quickly became involved in sponsoring many children through the years. Morag helps broadcast the message CID are trying to promote, encouraging awareness about what we do and about the children we help, by sharing information with others in her local parish and community. While chatting it became apparent how fond of CID and the children Morag has become, as she reminisces about one of the first times she had a shoe box collection for CID. The collection filled a full washing machine box and she jokes as she explains it was that heavy it

took five of them to actually lift it into the removal van. Morag also enjoys watching the children grow and begin leading their own lives, and expressed how pleased she was on one trip to Romania when two of the older children who had moved, Florin and Rafael, returned to visit their friends and spend some time with them.

Morag loves visiting Romania and seeing all that it has to offer, and watching how it has improved especially since joining the EU. People are receiving better living conditions, healthcare and transport. By supporting CID, Morag has been able to watch not only CID develop into the charity it has but also watch as Romania grew and developed, and continues to do so for its people.

Morag enjoys her visits to the hospices and seeing firsthand the wonderful care that they receive. She talks about how well all the children are looked after, as well as how all the staff really care about each individual child and their needs. She also talks about how Valentina is a very caring person, both to the children and towards her, as when she visits Valentina always looked after her, took her on trips to explore and made her feel safe and part of the CID family.

When we talked I asked why CID. Her response, "once you see the children and meet them... you can't stop supporting them... they are so deserving of it", that was when I knew how important CID was to Morag and how important the support she gives is.

## Christine Cook



# "No-one has ever become poor by giving"

Anne Frank, Diary of Anne Frank

Christine Cook's personal diaries from her time visiting Romania certainly echo this sentiment and highlight what the charity

means to her. Certain times in your life it can appear as though a perfect storm has led you to a certain place or experience, or in the case of Christine Cook it led her to Children in Distress! Christine initially became involved with the charity after reading about the "hell on earth" described in the Yorkshire Post's appeal for help, and then a chance day trip to Thirsk led her into one of our charity shops and this reaffirmed her commitment to help after seeing the walls adorned with pictures. In particular a group of children keeping vigil of their dead friend surrounded by candles, no technical family but still being one to each other. It was also at this time that she met our amazing Eddie Errington who told her of his missions delivering aid and how to sponsor a child. Inspired beyond words as Christine says it "disturbed so many comfortable lives" Christine rallied her local village into action humbled herself when a teenage tearaway came into their fish and chip shop used as the local collection point, crying and donated her own teddy saying "for them kids". It was then almost inevitable when asked by the Yorkshire Post for people to write in with their memories of how the campaign touched their life she simply wrote "touching my life? what about the children in Romania?" Christine was then interviewed with the most moving article being produced.





# *In-memoriam*

## EDDIE ERRINGTON

**Dearest Eddie, we will be missing your joy, your kindness and your laughter**

**We lost Eddie. It is sad and painful saying that.**

**Edward Errington was a founding member of our charity and drove one of the first lorries across to Romania with his great friends Dr John Walmsley and Jim Klincke. He was instrumental until the very end in driving the charity forward to what the charity is today. It is with great sadness to inform you of his passing in March after a long illness.**

Eddie Errington, how do you try and begin to do justice to the man whose unrelenting support and dedication to Children in Distress made us into the charity we are today? If you knew Eddie personally please consider yourself blessed, if you only read about Eddie and his actions sadly you only knew 1% of the man. Eddie was a true unsung hero, a man of honour and action, the type of person you would always want fighting your corner. Luckily for us all and all our children in our care he was forever fighting

for the best for them. He worked tirelessly, never seeking praise or validation for his actions, his moral compass and faith led him. He was a go to person “a doer with the most terrific heart” recalls Roy Wheeler of his great friend to get any job done, no distances too far to travel if he thought it would benefit others. Eddie was the embodiment of Father Christmas but never a “technical” one. Eddie was 100% for the children “for his kids”.



## DAVID PRESTON

**David Preston was a much loved husband, father, son, brother and uncle.**

He will be remembered by many through his career at FVS and Prestons of Potto, most notably for the development of the Heavy Haulage transports which he loved.

Outside of work David was a keen motor-sports athlete, and loved spending Saturdays with his best friend Paul on his Trials Bike.

David Preston has ensured for many years the transport and storage of all the goods for our programs in Romania, becoming one of the important supporters of Children in Distress.

David’s contribution was highly appreciated and represented also an important financial input to our work in Romania

We are sending sincere condolences to the bereaved family.

Goodbye David and Godspeed.

All of us at Children in Distress were thrilled when on the Diamond Jubilee Year, Eddie was one of the recipients of the Sovereign’s personal Maundy Gift.

The tributes that have flooded in are testament to the place Eddie will always hold in the hearts of us supporters – a founding member and honorary trustee “who was the rock on which Children in Distress was built upon” “one of God’s special people” “the most magical smile” “forever twinkling eyes”.....Eddie “the rock” forever our charities diamond. Thank you.

Eddie was and will remain one of the charity’s pillars. He inspired us, motivated us and taught us all what dedication means.

We will pray for his beloved wife Sylvia who always supported him and his family and we know for certain that Eddie has a good place in heaven.

# A story about hope

**An implacable destiny brings a family together and unites them more than ever**

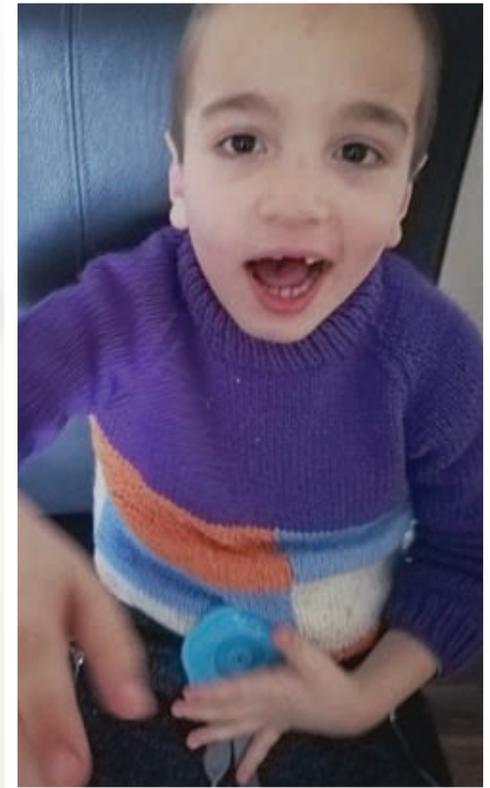
G. and A. are siblings. They were both diagnosed with autism. Having a somewhat different child in Romania is hard enough but having two is quite an unspeakable ordeal. Everyone struggles to understand and to accept the harsh reality and the parents were faced with numerous questions revolving around the idea that maybe they did not deserve this grim destiny and maybe somewhere, a grave mistake happened that changed their lives forever. At the beginning, they thought that they were living a nightmare and that maybe they would wake up one day and their kids would be normal, smiling, laughing, having fun, playing around like any other child. But gradually, reality set in and they understood that it is important to fight hard and to never give up on your loved ones.

The parents never complained for one bit and since their birth they got really invested, body and soul, in changing the lives of their beloved special boys who deserve all the chances and the love in the world. They started therapy few years ago and



several times per week take their boys to therapy and try to offer them everything in their powers, to make their children's dreams come true. Mundane aspects of their lives, like buying new clothes for the little ones or for themselves is not on the agenda as other problems are far more important. The children arrived at St. Christopher to spend time with their peers, to get involved in various lucrative and educational workshops, to create strong bonds and relationships and to continue to be surrounded with attention, care and lots of affection.

We are incredibly proud of our group of young people as they are thoughtful and considerate individuals who learnt how to



behave around children with special needs and who enjoy making them feel accepted and a part of something great. The boys, G. and A. were incredibly well-received, and the other children protected them during their games, made sure no one got hurt or crying during various entertaining activities. G. visited the centre on several occasions, and he had special moments with the specialized caregiver, and he made progress here at the centre surrounded by our big-hearted children. Together they understood important life lessons like how great it feels to not be selfish, to avoid bullying and other unpleasant situations and how to be better every day.

# Happy Easter !

## Spring 2019

**Celebrating Spring and 1st of March with creative workshops and lots of wonderful arts and crafts activities**



Spring is celebrated in our country on the 1st of March, a wonderful date for new beginnings and an opportunity to show our love and appreciation to all the ladies that have filled our hearts with long-lasting memories throughout the years.

Creative workshops have been planned and organized at the St. Christopher, replacing the endless hours of playtime and running around. The children have put their minds, hands and hearts to work to create beautiful tokens of their appreciation. In keeping with each year's tradition, the children will get to share smiles, hugs and handcrafted objects called "martisoare" to all the important ladies in their lives. Moreover, they will organize a spring themed march on the city streets to bring the same happiness to women who work

hard for their families and loved ones. They are quite keen to brighten everyone's day and have planned on sharing the love with their teachers too, their Mums and Grans and all our wonderful Sponsors that make it happen every day and offer us the opportunity to be by the children's side. Big plans require lots of hours of handy work, so the little ones dedicated their time to meet the tight deadline that is swiftly approaching. Each handshake, hug, smile, gentle petting and word will get rewarded with the help of their creative endeavor.

Everyone is so excited to participate each day in the creative workshops and we have been using surprising objects, feathers, beads, leaves, to make small yet beautiful brooches and accessories to be proudly worn on the lapels of our ladies' coats.



**Help Hope and Hospice Association team shares the love, hope and dreams among the less fortunate ones who need our help the most**

We hope that our readers are already familiar with our operating partner and sister organisation Help, Hope and Hospice Association's mission and goals Christopher's team is determined to continue to remain by the side of the people who need it the most, to fight hard and bring hope and love and a chance to live better and dare to dream about a brighter future among less fortunate individuals who need a hand to make it or to overcome life's shortcomings.

The combined team of specialists decided to travel to Momaia village in Arges County, an economically challenged area populated with 500 Roma families who have at least 7 members each and who live in grim conditions, forgotten by authorities and marginalized by

the community. The Romas here are called "rudari" because they used to work in construction and building of houses and are experienced brick forgers. With the help of the parish Priest and along a group of volunteers people that joined the Help, Hope and Hospice Association's team, we brought so much joy and very-much needed presents to the children consisting of proper clothes for the cold season and cosy blankets.

The families found in the area live in improper homes and most adults find day jobs at locals, usually picking fruits and berries and most often, the children are forced to abandon school and join their parents in raising the younger members of their families due to insufficient funds needed for transportation, clothes and school supplies.

When we arrived they forgot about the low

temperatures and thanked nicely for our kind gesture. When asked, one child replied that he is not yet curious to see what he got as he knows his Mom will take care of everything and each sibling will get something from the bag. Another Mom told us that her child will now have clothes for school, and we were delighted to hear that she insists to see him graduate.

We are positive there is a lot of potential in the area and with a little help, these people could change their destiny and the community would begin to thrive. Where there is no education, there is no tomorrow, unfortunately. But with sustained efforts, we are sure that the young ones will choose to go to school and change their lives for the better.



# Little Laurentiu overcomes another challenge

Recently Laurentiu became increasingly agitated and all the symptoms indicated the fact that he was not feeling well.

The nurses called our paediatrician and it was decided to call the ambulance and transfer Laurentiu to the Grigore Alexandrescu Emergency Children's Hospital. He was immediately cared for by a highly trained medical, the doctors noticed that the shunt used for draining the cephalon-rachidial fluid was not working properly and had migrated thus it required immediate replacement. To avoid the accumulation of excess cephalon-rachidial fluid in the cranial box, the team performed an emergency intervention.

Following the surgical intervention, Laurentiu's condition has improved and he recovered in a relatively short period and was brought back home supported at St. Margaret's. Laurentiu is now back in his safe home, surrounded by a vigilant medical team and his best friends who surround him with their care and love every day.



# After nine years, Madalin is happy to see his Mum again!

Sadly, Madalin's health has deteriorated during the last couple of months and he had to undergo several blood tests and thorough investigations to help the doctors in charge with his case establish a diagnosis, course of action and proper treatment.

The Centre's team and specialists have been by his side all the way making sure all his needs are being addressed and most importantly, that his family members are informed about his current status. His Mom was contacted on several occasions to obtain permission regarding a surgical intervention which needs to be performed in the shortest time at Pitesti Paediatric Hospital. The centre's team of social workers travelled to another county in Olt, in a remote and hard to reach village. Madalin's Mom is facing economic deprivation and her financial possibilities are limited to say the least. She has other two children in her care, from previous relationships and finding a steady job is part of her daily struggles.

Mom decided to visit Madalin at the centre and she was truly looking forward to being reunited with her son. Her financial situation prevents frequent travelling and her constant woes make it impossible for her to keep in touch with our son and team. The reunion brought tears to our eyes and we were incredibly blessed to witness such special moments for Madalin who will continue to be in touch with his Mom during the following period, especially as she has to go through a surgical intervention.

Our centre's management made sure that all the travel costs are covered so that Mom and son can continue to share special moments and spend quality time together, needed during post-surgery recovery period. We hope that Madalin will overcome his upcoming medical problems and that he will return to better health having Mom by his side and lots of tender loving care from our pro team.



# An emotional reunion

After a long period when Alexandru has been actively involved in the school related and daily activities developed at Don Orione Association, and on previously established days he was scheduled for his dialysis, we finally managed to find an opening in his schedule which allowed him to get together with his old chums from St. Andrew.

Thus, after a long treatment day he got some very-much needed rest, had lunch and attended the meeting with the charity's two social workers.

He was incredibly glad to meet up with his friends and ready to tell them stories about his latest life developments and challenges. He was hands down in all activities set up by Don Orione Association during a busy time of the year, the Christmas holidays, and he was so proud to play one of the three Magi whom Announced the birth of Jesus during a nativity scene re-enacted by his friends at the Association.



In the meantime, Alexandru is intensely preparing his Bacalaureate exam which will take place in the summer. He also mentioned his plans as he would like to graduate and receive his Bacalaureate diploma followed by an admission exam at the Psychology Faculty. His dream is to become an accomplished psychologist able to support the ones who need it the most.

Feeling emotional and quite anxious, Alexandru gladly received the present brought to him by his friend's, Mr. Peter Jenkins, messengers, his big-hearted supporter who loves to surprise his protégé and brighten Alexandru's days by sending him a ray of hope.

At the end of the visit, Alexandru thanked us for the nice surprise and mentioned the fact that we are always welcome whenever we feel like catching up and having a swell time with an old chum we are incredibly proud and fond of him.



## Down Syndrome Day



On International Down Syndrome Day, March 21, Cristiana, the Ambassador from Children in Distress, visited the AnTanTe Maria Early Education Centre and celebrated the day by playing fun and exciting games along a group of beautiful children.

The Care and Early Education Centre An-TanTe Maria, run by the Bucharest Social Assistance Department together with Children in Distress joined hands to celebrate the International Down Syndrome Day and dedicated a dance and music workshop to the children found in their care. The little ones were invited to clap their hands, move to the rhythm, sing songs and happy tunes and have a jolly good time. Their enthusiasm and infinite love for everything and whatever they do is an inspiration to us all and we would like to see more people loving each other and living harmoniously like

these children already do. To mark the occasion, everyone wore mismatched socks and didn't feel different for one second.

Cristiana received a warm welcome as she got surrounded by happy faces, hugged and kissed and congratulated while "a belated happy birthday" anthem enlivened the atmosphere. Cristiana had a wonderful day filled with magic moments and lots of laughter. Celebrating childhood is one of her favourite past times and if possible, she would love to do it every day. We are sure we would like to join in the fun and forget about our daily sorrows.



# New kids on the block

## Vlad

Vlad, the newest child at St. Andrew's Centre, placed in our specialized care, who arrived February 20.

Vlad was born ten years ago, on November 18, 2009 and sadly, he was diagnosed with chronic infantile encephalopathy sequelae (brain injury related problems), severe spastic tetraparesis and severe neuro-psycho-motor retardation. He comes from a single-parent family and has other two siblings. Unfortunately, their Mom struggles to find work, so the children live in an unstable environment. He remained close to his family for the first four years of his life until his condition got increasingly worse and he required specialized medical care and monitoring due to his diagnosis and associated medical problems.

He was transferred to a facility in Pitesti and during his entire stay he did not make positive progress and his condition got worse. His medical file includes numerous hospitalizations at Pitesti Pediatric Hospital and Nicolae Robanescu Neurological, Psychological and Motor Recovery Centre in Bucharest.

Based on doctor's recommendation, the child needed to be transferred to another medical facility ready to cater to his special needs as his condition requires intubation and an oxygen tank plus a gastric pumping device on the ready to come in handy during critical moments. This is where our team stepped in and we did everything in our powers to have the child transferred to St. Andrew's.

Although Vlad is not in the best shape from a medical point of view, he is a very happy child and engaged whenever people talk or sing to him. He establishes eye contact and can look one in the eye for longer. He seems curious whenever things take place around him. This side of Vlad surprised us and gave us hope and encouraged us in our endeavor to bring him to our specialized centre dedicated to children in need. We already got the bed and all the required attires ready for him and we are looking forward to his recovery!



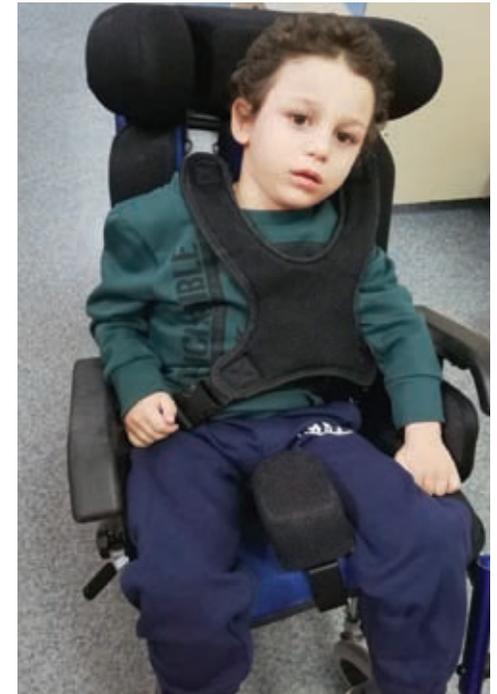
## Petru

An adorable boy, aged 5-years old, with sparkly eyes and curly hair can now brighten our days.

His name is Laurentiu-Petre and until recently, he has been living with his parents, paternal Gran and older sister. His health got increasingly worse and the medical care became a complicated endeavour for the parents. Next, they asked for the maternal Gran to step in but, unfortunately, she doesn't have the funds and medical skills required to care for the young boy. When the little one got increasingly worse, he was hospitalized at a Children's Hospital for several medical tests and investigations and the medical team informed the family that Laurentiu-Petre might suffer from a genetic condition with a progressive evolution but until present, no clear diagnosis has been established by the doctors.

The little one is currently accommodating to his new home and environment and he is surrounded with lots of love and warmth by the medical and care staff. His new friends already made acquaintance with him and enjoy spending time in his company. They will share special moments in the centre's courtyard when the weather allows it during sensory stimulation sessions organized by our dedicated specialists.

Moreover, we are confident that the maternal grandmother will continue to visit her grandson and make sure he has everything he needs during the following months. She is the family member that will hopefully remain close to Laurentiu-Petre and that they will continue to share beautiful moments together.



# Stars4Dreams

## Good Deeds Caravan

This April we will be delighted to join the Stars4Dreams Concert, an event that celebrates the 30th anniversary of Children in Distress. CID has dedicated thirty years of activity, lots of time, affection and tender loving care for over 18,000 children with incurable or terminally ill conditions.

We initiated the Good Deeds Caravan to find out how many good deeds were done lately by the younger generation. On the occasion, we will have the opportunity to personally meet and greet them and to urge them to continue in the same note. We would like to learn more about what motivates them and if it was an emotional decision which led them to make good deeds. We would like to bring forward the sensitive side of the younger generation and motivation to change our society for the better. The Good Deeds Caravan will take place in the high-schools of Bucharest. The teenagers will be invited to write down a paragraph about a recent good deed and all the notes will be introduced in a Starst4Dreams urn that will be found in every participating high-school. Each high-school board will

draw 10 good deeds that will be rewarded with an invitation to the concert.

Life's greatest challenge is to become better people every day. It is wonderful to witness the joy on another human's face and to know that you are the reason behind it. Any charity will be rewarded at some point in life. This is the biggest challenge as a teenager: to choose to be good and to do good deeds. To contribute towards fulfilling the dreams of people around us. No good deed goes unrewarded, and sometimes the reward is explicit, oftentimes it is implicit. It is a certainty and it will happen sooner or later. We challenge the teenager within you to be a part of the next generation of people who like to do good deeds!

Many thanks to our partner DHM Company



## 28th - 29th of October Conference

### “A holistic approach to the care of children with severe neurological conditions.”

A conference to support specialists, care staff and parents.

During the past thirty years, Children in Distress Foundation has been committed to supporting children who can only count on today and forget about an uncertain tomorrow.

Palliative care for children with severe neurological conditions, recurrent battles against a cruel social system and our desire to help parents, specialists and people who interact with these children determined us to organize an event in high-demand at the moment for multiple professional and social categories.

The conference entitled “A holistic approach to the care of children with severe neurological conditions” will be held in October and will be equally addressed to specialists in the field – family practitioners, resident doctors, nurses, care staff, social workers, psychologists and psycho-pedagogues, parents and volunteers who constantly or incidentally interact with this category of children.

Every day our society comes into contact with children suffering from severe neurological diseases without being aware of the

practices and techniques needed for approaching these children from a psychological, pedagogical and psycho-medical point of view.

The Conference will include presentations coordinated by psychological and educational specialists, medical practitioners who work in centres who offer palliative care services, educators and teachers who activate in UK and Romanian schools.

These specialists will address issues related to adequate child care when neurological conditions are present, leisure time activities and games, appropriate body posture and interaction, useful feeding habits and techniques, and possible risks arising from an inadequate feeding process, specialized IT equipment that support the educational activities of children with severe neurological diseases and other hot topics of real interest and service.

We are looking forward to welcoming and hosting a large number of specialists eager to remain on top of their profession and to meet and greet those who are willing to make a major change in approaching the child with severe neurological conditions!



# Little Volunteers

Empathy is formed during the first years of life! It is a strong enough reason behind CID's decision to place future charitable actions in the hands of the younger generation. Under the Jeans4Dreams umbrella campaign, we decided to energize generations of people who love wearing jeans and to make them aware of the challenges faced by children with disabilities, with severe neurological diagnoses and to provoke today's generation of children to act and support this category of children.

The first actions debuted throughout several schools in Bucharest and in the company of youngsters from 0 to 5th grades we put on jeans, we decorated cardboard figurines, we presented our dreams along the dreams of children with disabilities from Saint Margaret's Centre and we understood that each and every one of us, notwithstanding age and background, can contribute in supporting children with disabilities.

After our initial success where we saw numerous children join our cause, we realized that this awareness campaign aimed at educating the next generation to become responsible citizens of our local communities from a social standing point must continue. Thus, we marched on and brought our dreams to other 3 kindergartens and to a second school in Bucharest, where, with the help of our dedicated volunteers, we were able to send our message in one special day and to talk to over 375 children about the importance of tolerance and empathy.

John Lennon used to say that "A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality!"

That's why our dream continues with the undaunted hope of conveying our message of tolerance, friendship and empathy towards children with severe neurological diseases, to children across the country and why not, across the border.

## John is the youngest child in our hospice

For 30 years Children In Distress has cared for children just like John. We provide hospice care for children with life threatening conditions because of accident, infection and birth defects. Our specialised staff provide life-changing therapies and treatments for our children. This is made possible by your help and support.

Donate today and change a child's life like John's.



[www.childrenindistress.org](http://www.childrenindistress.org)  
0141 559 5690

Children In Distress,  
Suite 30, 94 Duke St,  
Glasgow G4 0UW

Registered Charity No: 1001327. Scottish Charity No SCO39383

## 30 Years on – still answering the call

Thirty years later since Dr. John Walmsley CID's founder started to organise the first convoys with goods to come to Romania, we plan to recreate one of the first mercy missions. We will do that in the memory of Eddie Erington who was part of the first convoy of trucks that left UK in 1989 /1990. It is to honour Eddie's life and legacy.

We recently lost Eddie Erington who was a great friend of Dr John Walmsley and helped inspire others to join our charity and make it the success it is today.

The treacherous conditions from the 1990's will hopefully not be replicated but the mission will involve a van filled with aid for CID's community projects, departing from the UK and travelling to Romania to coincide with the 30th Anniversary Supporters Tour in September -October.

We are hopeful to involve many of the original sponsors as Roy Wheeler, good friend with Eddie and Dr. John too.

Roy is currently in negotiations to hire a van (like he did in the 1990's) and to work out the logistics of the campaign!

We would love to have as many people involved with this campaign and if you have any ideas or items you would like to donate please get in touch with [caroline.wilkie@childrenindistress.org.uk](mailto:caroline.wilkie@childrenindistress.org.uk) or please just help sponsor the fuel cost!



Roy Wheeler

# HIMALAYA

## Climb4Dreams Campaign

Blue is the colour that we associate with the happiness written on our faces. We received the good news that our friend, Alexandru Tudose, wants to climb with the famous blue denim ribbon in the Himalaya Mountains to support the children who are in the care of Children in Distress.

The Blue Denim Genes Ribbon is a unifying symbol of hope for rare genetic diseases communities around the world. By wearing a Blue Denim Genes Ribbon, you're building awareness and creating a collective voice for rare disease patients and advocates.

Alexander's journey transformed into a campaign, HimalayaClimb4Dreams. It is a campaign aimed at supporting our centre, a facility that celebrates 30 years since its establishment, 30 years of tender loving care offered to over 18.000 children.

Alexandru has set out to reach the Lobuche East peak at 6,119 meters high, thus having the chance to prove that an ordinary man can turn his dreams into reality. He also tries to point out that there are children in this world for whom mundane things are

out of their reach. It is Alexandru's way of asking others to rally behind the goal of supporting children to continue to dream about tomorrow. We would like to make the impossible, possible!

This expedition will be filled with emotions and excitement. It is a 19-day expedition, an expedition in which a team of 8 Romanian will have their fair share of adrenaline and many kilometres of travel to foreign places. We will support them with every step they will make until they reach their destination. Alexandru will keep us up to date with the latest expedition news.

Looking forward to the day when Alexandru will return home and tell us everything in detail about this fantastic expedition.

Thank you for Alex and his friends who joined him in this adventure and thank you to all those who supported him!

If you want to support this initiative you can contact **Tina Connelly at 0141 559 5690** or **admin2@childrenindistress.org.uk**

# Jeans4Dreams Day

We dedicated the month of February to saying thank you and meaning it! It was a month filled with emotion, excitement and lots of hard work. We thought about various ways of expressing our gratitude towards our supporters, people whom have offered their time and skills put a smile on children's faces.

On February 28 we celebrated the Rare Disease Day by organizing a Jeans-4Dreams themed event.

At the same time, we wanted to thank everyone for lending us a hand or leaning a shoulder when we needed it the most and to reward them for everything they

have done by inviting them to participate in this special event. Moreover, we plan to continue to promote our Jeans4Dreams campaign which has enabled us to rally numerous people willing to join our cause. We transformed scattered ideas and thoughts into a coherent plan which yielded positive results.

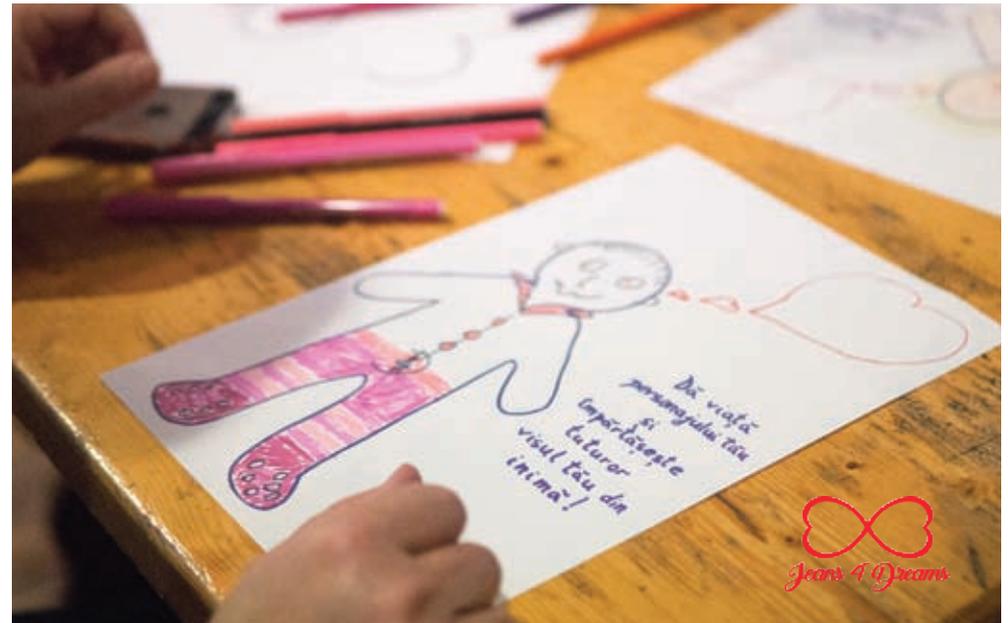
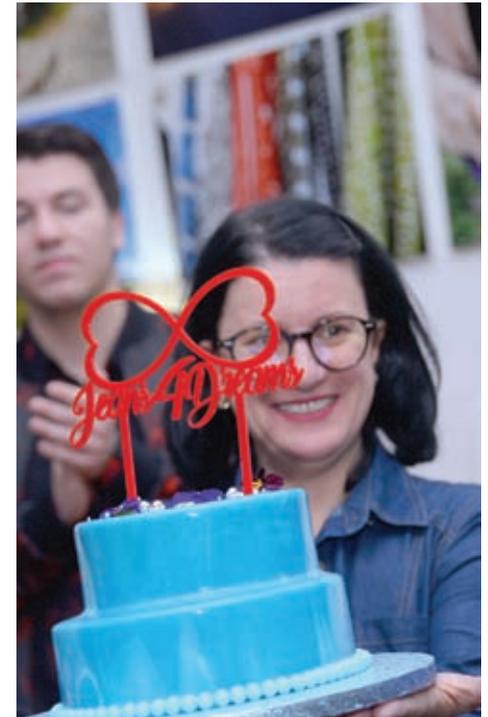
Blue jeans was the preferred dress code, because it all started with the experience we all had with our first pair of jeans. It was a pleasure to meet so many people in jeans, who showed their support for children with rare conditions or terminally ill ones. Emotions filled the air as almost all



the people who did extraordinary things for Children in Distress (CID).

We celebrated happiness, the happiness of the children in the CID house because of these wonderful people who have supported us all the time. We could not leave without capturing as many moments as possible in photographs that become the proof of the beautiful friendship that brings people together in sharing the same goals. Isn't it fantastic to have wonderful memories?

At the end of the evening we wholeheartedly sang "happy anniversary" to the beautiful children we all try to support and offered a small gift to our honoured guests: a greeting card announcing the arrival of spring, a framed picture with the children who live in CID's home and a badge to remind them they continue to be CID's FRIENDS.





**Program for Annual Thanksgiving  
Romanian tour  
30th of September - 6th of October**

**30th of September Day 1:** Guests arrival - transfer from Otopeni airport to Capital Platza Hotel Bucharest

**1st of October Day 2:** Visit the Fortress of Fagaras and the Sambata de Sus Monastery. Stay overnight at Albata Guesthouse.

**2nd of October Day 3:** Fagaras - Cluj. There will be a small city tour in Cluj. Then it goes to Turda Salt Mine and returns to Alba Iulia. Stay overnight in Alba.

**3rd of October Day 4:** Alba Iulia - Sarmizecetusa Regia - Alba. In the first part of the day visits Sarmizecetusa Regia, then return to Alba and visit Alba Iulia Fortress.

**4th of October Day 5:** Return to Bucharest, on the Alba - Sibiu - Transfagarasean to Curtea de Arges - Pitesti (visit St. Christopher and St. Andrew) - Bucharest.

**5th of October Day 6:** Visit St. Margarets Childrens Centre (morning)  
13.00pm Thanksgiving service at the Anglican Church in Bucharest  
20.00pm Gala Dinner - 30th Anniversary (at Capital Platza Hotel)

**6th of October Day 7:** Guest departure - transfer from the hotel to the airport.

**Total cost for this year's Supporters Tour is £550 per person**

This includes:

- Flights
- Pick up from airport
- Accommodation
- Food
- All itinerary activities

We think you will agree that this is fabulous value for money. Please join us and make our 30th anniversary something truly special.

For more information call:  
**0141 559 5690** or  
Email:  
**admin2@childrenindistress.org.uk**  
or visit the website on:  
**www.childrenindistress.org**

**DONATE TODAY**

**Donate £ today**

I wish to pay by cheque / postal order or Access (Visa / Switch card given here in express)

(I enclose a cheque / postal order for £..... made payable to Children in Distress)

Card No.

Valid from Date..... Security No.....

Expiry Date..... Switch Issue No.....

Signature..... Date.....

**Donate £ monthly from today OR**

**Donate £12.00 and sponsor a child today**

Account Holders Name:.....

My Account No.....

Bank Sort Code..... Starting Date.....

To the Manager - (Name and address of Bank)

.....

Signature..... Date.....

Official use only. Please pay to the account of Children in Distress (Acc no 10101169) at The Royal Bank of Scotland, 10 Gordon Street, Glasgow G1 3PL (Sort code 83-07-06)

**Your personal details**

Name.....

Address.....

Postcode..... Tel No.....

Email.....

To reduce the cost to Children in Distress, I do not require a receipt.

I am a taxpayer and authorise CID to reclaim the tax on my donations since 6 April 2000 and all future donations (unless I notify otherwise) as Gift Aid donations.

Please send me more information on sponsoring a child.



**Children in Distress**, Suite 30 Ladywell Business Centre, 94 Duke Street, Glasgow G4 0UW Tel: (44) 0141 559 5690 Fax: (44) 0141 559 5694  
E-mail: [admin2@childrenindistress.org.uk](mailto:admin2@childrenindistress.org.uk) [www.childrenindistress.org](http://www.childrenindistress.org)  
Registered Charity No 1001327 Scottish Registered Charity Number: SCO 39383

**Your love for  
children and  
willingness to  
share your time  
and effort will  
have an eternal  
impact.**

**Thank you!**

