

19 June 2014

To whom it may concern,

Robyn Baxter is fundraising for Nelson's Journey by encouraging some of Norfolk's schools to hold a non-uniform day to raise awareness and funds for Nelson's Journey following the support provided to her family after the death of her daughter.

Nelson's Journey provides support for children and young people aged 0-17 years inclusive, living in Norfolk, who have experienced the death of a significant person in their life. We aim to improve their emotional wellbeing by; increasing their confidence and self-esteem, providing education about the causes of death and enabling families to talk openly about their bereavement. We also provide opportunities to remember those who have died and to help children express and understand their emotions.

Nelson's Journey are close to achieving a long-term goal of securing a purpose-built headquarters, Smiles House. Smiles House will enable us to better support the needs of bereaved children and young people living in Norfolk. The ground floor will be designated to service delivery, allowing individuals who are referred to us to receive support in a neutral and understanding environment – an option which is not available at present, with visits taking place either at the family home or at school. Whilst we have secured the funding for the main building and are due to move in in the autumn, we are looking for sponsors to fund individual rooms and smaller items. Money raised from this non-uniform day could be used as sponsorship for Smiles House, if requested at the end of the fundraising.

We hope your school will support Robyn's fundraising by taking part in a non-uniform day to support our work with Norfolk's bereaved children and young people. If you do decide to hold a non-uniform day, you can make payment to Nelson's Journey for the total amount raised via cheque or bank transfer. Please make cheques payable to 'Nelson's Journey'. Bank transfers can be done using the following details:

Account Name: Nelson's Journey
Reference: SCHOOL NAME – Non-uniform day
Account Number: 30120375
Sort Code: 20-99-21

Any support that you could provide towards this would be very much appreciated by the Baxter family and our charity.

If you have any queries about this fundraising activity, please contact Robyn directly. If you have any queries about the charity or any other fundraising, please contact us at enquiries@nelsonsjourney.org.uk or call 01603 431788.

Yours sincerely,



Sophie Berry
Senior Fundraising and Marketing Officer

A message from Robyn:

To whom it may concern,

My name is Robyn Baxter and I am appealing to all Norfolk's schools to help raise money to furnish and equip the brand new purpose built premises for Nelson's Journey; Smiles House. I propose doing this by holding a county non-school uniform day. I am aware that many schools do not have a uniform so I was thinking a wear something purple day may work, as purple is Nelson's Journey's colour and was my late daughter Maisie's favourite colour.

In February 2012, my funny, happy, clever, kind, outgoing, beauty of a daughter Maisie unexpectedly chose to end her own life; she tragically hanged herself at home. She was only 13 when she died; leaving behind two brothers and two sisters aged 11 weeks, 9yrs, 11yrs and 16yrs. It goes without saying that losing Maisie, but still having to function and focus all my energies into helping my surviving children to try and get through this catastrophic event was, and still remains the biggest challenge of my life. When I first heard of Norfolk based child bereavement charity Nelson's Journey, it was pivotal in the slow road to recovery for my children, and a real lifeline to us all.

Recently my eldest son Jody (now 18) was asked if he would speak at the Nelson's Journey Annual Meeting about his experience on behalf of children who have benefited from support from Nelson's Journey. It was here that I first heard of the Smiles House Appeal. Jody was also asked to write a piece for the Nelson's Journey annual review. It gives an honest, open insight into exactly how horrific child bereavement can be and how Nelson's Journey provided him with the crucial support, through various means that he so desperately needed to help him achieve some kind of new normal life.

I would be so grateful if you took the time to read Jody's journey (see attachment) as it will hopefully explain exactly why we as a family, would like to give back to this amazing cause.

Originally, after attending the Nelson's Journey Annual Meeting in support of Jody's speech, I called Maisie's old schools to see if they would like to help sponsor a room in her memory. This soon snowballed after calling the cluster schools to see if they would like to get on-board. After speaking to more and more head teachers, it dawned on me just how many pupils across our county have received support from Nelson's Journey, as everyone I spoke to knew of Nelson's Journey as they were or had supported so many of their own pupils. This got me thinking as I wasn't even aware of Nelson's Journey until I needed them. What started out as another way to try and honour my own daughter's memory in a positive way has turned into a mission to raise awareness of this vital charity. I feel it is very fitting that the children of Norfolk could collaboratively raise money for Nelson's Journey new building as it is an inevitable sad reality that many of them will come to lean on Nelson's Journey for some kind of bereavement support in the future.

The proposed date for this non-school uniform day is 04.07.14. The local press have expressed an interest so it would be nice to try and get all the schools to hold their non-uniform days on the same date. However this is not essential. Appreciate this doesn't leave much time to organise, but I look forward to hearing if you would like to participate in this event.

Please find attached Jody's story and an email from Nelson's Journey explaining more about their 'Smiles House Appeal' and how to pay any donations you may collect should you choose to join in with this event. Please don't hesitate to contact me directly if you have any queries on this email address: robynmaisie@outlook.com

Many thanks in advance,
Robyn Baxter