

Dear Friends

Christmas is a time we often reflect on our childhood – I especially remember the excitement of getting my first bike, do you?

This Christmas morning 6 year old Olivia will be thrilled about getting a new bike courtesy of TAD's Freedom Wheels programme; I think she will be especially excited because she never expected to ride a bike, ever.

Olivia has congenital myopathy – a disease that means the muscles in Olivia's legs cannot develop properly. Without the capacity to walk, no one, including Olivia, ever thought she would ride a bike.

My name is Jessica Canacott. As an occupational therapist for Freedom Wheels I have helped fit dozens of kids for their new bikes that give them independence and inclusion, not to mention making them fit and strong. In that time I never cease to be amazed just what a wonderful feeling it is to see the kids and their parents realising a dream that they previously never thought possible.

Olivia is a lovely, positive child with lots to say! She has a cool pink and purple wheel chair to get around in, but out of it, she can only crawl.

When I was fitting Olivia for her bike she wasn't so sure about how it would all work; I asked Olivia if she liked the idea of riding a bike and her reply to me was "I can't walk, you know!" Once I started setting up the pink and purple bike she became very interested indeed as they are not only her favourite colours but it would also match her wheelchair!

On the bike, all strapped in and with a little help getting started from mum, Olivia was able to pedal and steer her way through our corridors and out into the car park.

With a push from mum Olivia was able to keep the bike moving on her own and when she realised she was riding all by herself, she called out "look mummy, I'm riding a big girl's bike!"



Yes, I would like to support TADNSW's Services

Please complete this form and return it to us in the reply paid envelope provided or fax to (02) 9890 1911.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 – Physio assessment cost to determine needs | <input type="checkbox"/> \$120 – Cost to research and develop solutions for client needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$300 – Subsidy for one device for client | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1500 – Support for one Regional Clinic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My choice \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly Gift* of \$ _____ |

METHOD OF PAYMENT (Please make cheques or money orders payable to TADNSW)

Cheque or money order Credit Card: Mastercard Visa OR Donate securely online at www.tadnsw.org.au

Card No

Name on Card _____

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ABN 82 002 042 462 CFN 10944 Gifts of \$2 or more to TADNSW are tax deductible.

*Payments will be automatically deducted from your credit card each month until instructed otherwise.

If you wish to be removed from this mailing list, please phone Director of Fundraising and Communications Mark Lees on direct line (02) 9912 3406.

Bringing joy to many

But these special bikes are not cheap and getting kids fitted to them is a complex procedure – it simply would not be possible without the wonderful and generous support of people like you.

Last Christmas, TAD's Freedom Wheels programme ran a campaign to help drive funding for our NSW Clinics in Port Macquarie, Tamworth, Newcastle, Nowra, Canberra, Wagga Wagga, Albury, Bathurst, Wellington, Dubbo and Wollongong – to continue to bring this unique gift to children all over the State. Not just in Sydney.

You might remember my colleagues Brendan and Weh urging you to support the Freedom Wheels programme, and you did. The good news is that 156 people helped hundreds of kids from all over NSW during the past year gain their independence.

To keep on working in the country, we need your support.

I am originally from the country and I can tell you that families of children with disabilities do it doubly tough out there. There is a lot less support and services and the requirements for travel are huge – of course this is compounded by the needs of the children. TAD's country clinic's make Christmas a little bit closer for these kids.

[Personalised] Did you know that 60% of the work I do is referred by government health professionals, but the government only pays less than 23% of our costs. We rely heavily on our supporters – you, to keep providing our services.

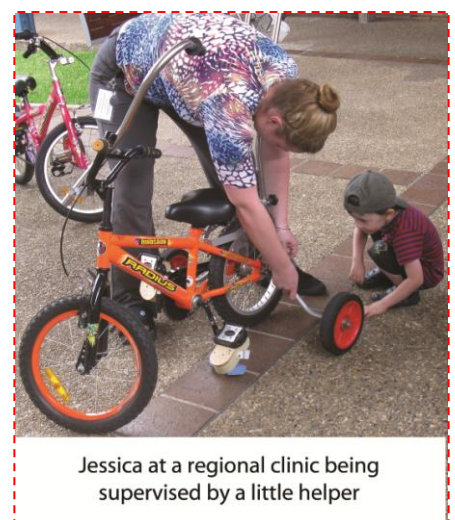
As this is the season for giving I'd like to ask you to think about the joy Olivia is going to feel this Christmas morning when she gets her new bike. I'd then ask you to think about those kids in the country who aren't quite as lucky as Olivia. With your support, many other kids with disabilities who never thought they would ride a bike can experience that same excitement. For the first time, they can join other children riding their new bikes up and down the street on Christmas morning.

My thanks to you, and all the best for a wonderful Christmas.

Yours sincerely,



Jessica Canacott
Occupational Therapist
TAD Disability Services NSW



PS – Olivia is lucky to be from the City, but I already know some kids in the country who are expecting my colleagues and I early in 2012. If you can help, then we can get them assessed for their bike so Christmas will come early for each of them next year!