

Small steps bring Keira closer to walking wish

Scores turn out to help youngster get vital operation

by **EMMA JUDD**

The News
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SHE'S on the road to getting treatment, one tiptoe at a time. Five-year-old Keira Power walked almost a mile on Sunday, from South Parade Pier to Clarence Pier.

She is determined to help her parents raise enough money so she can have a life-changing operation.

And there were around 100 children and parents following Keira every step of the way.

The reason her steps have to be so small is because Keira was born with a condition that means her muscles are exceptionally inflexible, so only tiptoeing is comfortable for her.

But her parents, Sally and Jason Power, of Goldcrest Close, Horndean, are hoping to raise between £45,000 and £50,000 to pay for an operation in the USA which would allow Keira to walk, run and skip like her young friends.

'We've broken the £25,000 barrier already, just in two months,' said Mrs Power. 'People have just taken this and run with it.'

Keira was born with spastic quadriplegia, a form of cerebral palsy.

Mrs Power added: 'Keira copes well with it now, because obviously she grew up with the disease. But it's when she gets older she'll find it harder.'

'Some of the children went to school with skipping ropes, and Keira said to me, "why can't I



FAMILY AFFAIR
From left, Jason Power, Keira, Evin and Sally

skip, Mummy?"

'We have to try and explain to her that different people can do different things, and hopefully, long term, who knows what she'll be able to do?'

Hope for the Power family lies in St Louis, Missouri, with an operation called selective dorsal rhizotomy.

It means problem nerves in Keira's spinal cord would be severed, meaning the muscles in her legs can finally relax enough to enable her to walk.

And if all goes well with the fundraising, Keira hopes to have the operation in October. She and her parents will stay in the States for a month, and then she'll face intensive physiotherapy to get her to walk for the first time. She has received huge support

from classmates and teachers at Horndean Infant School, where she is a pupil.

The next fundraising event for Keira will be a quiz night held at the Masonic hall in Cosham on July 10 from 7.30pm.

All are welcome to attend, and tickets cost £5.

For more details on how to help Keira, see keiraswish.org or email admin@keiraswish.org. Cheques can be sent to the Keira Power Appeal, 4 Goldcrest Close, Horndean, PO8 9YB.

We've broken the £25,000 barrier

Sally Power



SUPPORT
People who took part in the walk for Keira

Awards handed out to volunteers

THE TIME, commitment and outstanding contributions of volunteers have been recognised at an awards ceremony.

Nearly 100 people were honoured at the Community First East Hampshire's 6th Annual Volunteering Awards.

A wide range of voluntary and community groups

were nominated for certificates for extraordinary achievements in supporting the local community across East Hampshire.

The evening included supper provided by Rkdia, part of Drum Housing, and music from Daisy and Henry Crew, finalists from a talent show called Show Off 2010.



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