

# Brave Keira's walk will bring her a step closer to getting treatment

Five-year-old will take on seafront challenge to raise funds for trip

by JEFF TRAVIS

The News

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HER footsteps are small and slow, but each one could be a step closer to Keira Power's dream of being able to walk like her friends.

The courageous five-year-old will walk nearly a mile – on her tip-toes and using a metal frame – along Southsea seafront in a bid to be able to enjoy the freedom her pals enjoy.

Keira struggles to walk as a condition she was born with means her muscles are very stiff and only tip-toeing around is comfortable.

But her parents Jason and Sally Power, of Goldcrest Close, Horndean, are hoping to raise £40,000 for an operation in America that could finally bring Keira's legs to life and allow her to walk.

Amazingly, since their story appeared in *The News* two months ago, the couple have managed to reach the halfway mark.

Two 'Spinathons' at Roko Gym in Copnor raised £6,000, a music and comedy evening at Moneyfields Social Club in Portsmouth netted £1,250 and a book sale at Mayfield School, North End, brought in £400.

Runner Alison Chase completed the London Marathon and Rachel Fair ran Brighton Marathon to rack up another £1,300.

And the family have received donations totalling more than £10,000.

The latest fundraising bid on Sunday will see Keira walk with her friends from South Parade Pier to Clarence Pier.

The message will be clear as each one of the participants from Horndean Infant School will be wearing a T-shirt with the words 'Keira's Wish'.

Mr Power, 35, told *The News*: 'She's been asking "what can I do, how can I help?"

'This is something we came up with. It will be right on the edge of how far she can go.

It won't be a fast walk, but she'll make it. She's very determined.

We have been going to all the fundraising events and she's been really pleased.



**BRAVE Keira Power**

She's raring to go.

'She will have all her friends with her, egging her on, so it will be good for her.'

As reported in *The News*, Keira was born with spastic quadriplegia, a form of cerebral palsy.

Her parents were devastated when they were told by doctors she would never walk independently.

But there is a glimmer of hope. An operation in St Louis, Missouri, called Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy, could solve the problem.

The operation severs prob-

lematic nerves in the spinal cord and, in doing so, the tension in the leg muscles is released and a child can walk.

Keira is hoping to have the operation in October.

'We have been in touch with a lot of the people who have had it done before,' said Mr

Power. 'We feel it's the right thing to do.'

For more details of how you can help visit keiraswish.org. Cheques can be sent to The Keira Power Appeal, 4 Goldcrest Close, Horndean, PO8 9YB. To contact the appeal email: Admin@keiraswish.org

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Jason Power