

# Smiling through

Christopher's  
Smile

coz kids get cancer too



» Charity spot

Highlighting the amazing work of local charities

## This month: Christopher's Smile

Karen and Kevin Capel set up Christopher's Smile in 2008 after losing their only son Christopher to an aggressive medulloblastoma brain tumour. Christopher suffered cruelly in his nearly two-year battle against cancer and died shortly before his 6th birthday. The charity is their way of trying to make a difference for others; survival rates for many children with cancer have not improved in over 50 years and many are left with terrible side effects from drugs normally used to treat adults.

**Their work:** Uniquely, Christopher's Smile focuses on raising money to fund research into drugs that target all forms of childhood cancer, particularly those whose prognosis is at its worst. So far £880,000 has been raised, funding four research positions, laboratory equipment and drug trials at the Institute of Cancer Research in Sutton. As from June, the charity's molecular pathology sequencing goes live at the Royal Marsden Hospital, the Institute's clinical partner, and will then be rolled out across the UK. This means children's tumours will be profiled, allowing for greater understanding into their nature

and hopefully safer, more effective treatments.

**Get involved:** All the money raised for Christopher's Smile goes directly to the cause, as the Capels run the charity themselves. When asked what is needed, Karen says: "Obviously cheques are great because ultimately research costs money, but there are other ways of helping, by raising our profile on social media, volunteering at an event, taking part in our fundraisers, lending skills, talking to employers and utilising contacts. It's that spider effect that we need". Feat for Feet is their annual fundraising race held in June at the MOD Vehicle Test Track in Bagshot and 17th October will see the annual autumn ball take place at Wentworth Golf Club. For tickets, to donate or for more information about the charity, visit [www.christopherssmile.org.uk](http://www.christopherssmile.org.uk). An easy way to donate is by text – COZK15 £3 to 70070 (or change the amount to anything up to £99).

Christopher, the Capels say, was known for his smile. Their wish is that the charity that bears his name will enable other families to smile.

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