



Starlight Children's Foundation – What we do

Starlight brightens the lives of seriously and terminally ill children by granting once-in-a-lifetime wishes and providing entertainment for children in hospitals and hospices throughout the United Kingdom. All Starlight's activities are aimed at distracting children from the pain, fear and isolation they can often feel as a result of their illnesses and strengthening family bonds at what is often a time of great stress.

Together with healthcare professionals, we have developed a programme of year-round entertainment and distraction which helps over 500,000 children every year who are hospitalised:

Starlight Wishes

Starlight Wishes are limited only by a child's imagination – from swimming with dolphins to going in a helicopter, from meeting a favourite sports team to being a police officer.

We aim to create a truly magical experience for the child and his or her family, exceeding all expectations and creating precious, unforgettable memories to share, laugh and smile about. We deal with every organisational detail and ensure that no additional burden is placed on parents. Starlight always involves the whole family in the wish, giving them happy memories whatever the future may hold.

You can refer any child who is aged 4 -18 years old (inclusive) and suffering from a life-threatening illness or life-shortening illness for a Starlight wish.

Starlight Parties

Being in hospital can be a scary experience for young patients – and equally hard for brothers, sisters and worried parents too. Starlight Parties, complete with clowns, face painters, party food, decorations, games and goody bags, create a positive experience for the whole family.

Starlight will provide you with everything you need for your party, including a goody bag for every child, decorations and tableware. We will provide funding for food and a whole range of entertainment, such as magicians, face painters, a disco, theatre group or petting zoo! We can also fund parties for older children, such as craft parties, pottery parties or even jewellery making parties.

Starlight Fun Centres

Starlight Fun Centres create hours of fun and distraction for unwell children in over 300 hospitals and hospice across the country. They are mobile entertainment units that incorporate a Nintendo Wii console, four Nintendo DSi, DVD/Blu-ray player, internet access and flat screen TV with freeview at absolutely no cost to you.

They can be wheeled right up to a sick child's bed or played on in the middle of a ward, entertaining and distracting several children at the same time and helping them to make friends. Playing on the Starlight Fun Centre makes children feel less anxious and worried about illness and treatment, and they often require less pain medication. The interactive games, especially Wii Fit, encourage children to get out of bed and move around, which aids healing and recovery.

Starlight Pantomimes

He's behind you!

Starlight Pantomimes give sick children the chance to boo, hiss, cheer and shout... and forget for a while about how unwell they feel. Twice a year, the Starlight Panto troupe criss-crosses the UK visiting hospitals and hospices and bringing distraction and fun to thousands of children. The four actors will come and give an hour long interactive performance full of music, dancing and magic to entertain the children in your care.

"Thank you so much for providing such a fantastic panto for the children. The Sleeping beauty cast were absolutely incredibly funny, interactive with the children and great singers. I can't thank you enough, they brought such enjoy, smiles and laughter to us all."

Christie DeNiese, Hospital Play Specialist, Worthing Hospital

Starlight Distraction Boxes

Starlight Distraction Boxes are filled with toys, games and puzzles that play specialists and nurses use to help children cope with various medical procedures such as taking blood, not just in hospitals and hospices but for home visits too. Children easily recognise the distinctive colours of the Starlight Distraction Box and are less scared and anxious about going to the treatment room or about a visit from the nurse.

"The Starlight Distraction Boxes have been invaluable. I use them many times each day and the toys are so successful in diverting children's attention away from the invasive procedures and helping them to remain calm. As a result, we use sedation less frequently for procedures that would otherwise require the child to be sedated."

Emily Moore, Hospital Play Specialist, Burton Hospital