

25 January 2008

MEDIA RELEASE

**New Tricycle For Tom**

Local Busselton boy Tom White is off and racing in his new specially modified tricycle thanks to the generosity of the Point Walter Golf Club Associates who donated vital funds to The Centre for Cerebral Palsy's Equipment Sponsorship Programme.

Living with cerebral palsy requires support and services beyond the means of most West Australian families, and hence The Centre for Cerebral Palsy's Equipment Sponsorship Programme often plays an important part in fulfilling unmet equipment needs for over 1000 children and adults with cerebral palsy across the state.

With the help of local businesses, community groups, individuals, Lions and Rotary Clubs who generously donate much needed funds, The Centre's Equipment Sponsorship Programme offers a means of funding for non-Government funded items that can enhance the lives of children and adults living with CP.

Tom has spastic diplegia cerebral palsy whereby the muscles in his legs and hands are tight and stiff, making movement difficult. Although Tom is not independently mobile, requiring the use of a walker and a manual wheelchair, regular use of his modified tricycle will assist in strengthening Tom's legs and trunk, improving balance when sitting and encouraging alternate leg patterns that are important for walking. Used daily the tricycle will assist in improving Tom's ability to stand and walk using his walker. Tom and his twin sister Chelsea are looking forward to starting pre-primary this year at West Busselton Primary School.

Tom and his family joined The Centre for Cerebral Palsy in April 2004 and have since maintained regular contact with The Centre's Country Resource Programme (CRP). The role of the Perth based CRP is to support families who have a child with cerebral palsy in rural and remote Western Australia. Services offered by the programme include consultative advice, education and advocacy to children and their families, local therapists and the general community in order to assist them to effectively achieve appropriate outcomes.

Local therapists in the family's community provide primary services to the family, however the CRP aims to support and enhance these local services by the sharing and provision of specialist knowledge and skills via telephone, teleconferencing, email, video and video conferencing, and/or direct contact when families or therapists visit the country team in Perth. The Centre for Cerebral Palsy is able to provide on-site accommodation at the Sir David Brand Centre at a reduced cost for families visiting Perth.

The Programme aims to support local therapists with information, knowledge and the development and design of specific techniques and equipment unique to cerebral palsy when requested.

In a recent study conducted by CP Australia the national peak body for organisations that provide assistance to people with CP, it has been established that there are 33,000 people with

cerebral palsy and similar disabilities in Australia and the cost of meeting equipment needs is as high as \$4.4 million.

Kathy Kane, Fundraising Manager from The Centre for Cerebral Palsy says in the last year, “we have been able to sponsor 51 items of equipment including walkers, wheelchairs, trikes, communication devices plus vital loan and trial equipment. An enormous contribution which has made a huge difference to the lives of so many. However, our Wish List never ends which is why the support of the entire WA community is vital to us”.

To make a donation or to support other WA kids like Tom contact Kathy Kane on (08) 9443 0228 or visit [www.tccp.com.au](http://www.tccp.com.au) . Alternatively, drop in to Professionals Busselton and make a donation in The Centre’s collection tin.



-ENDS-

***For further information please contact:***

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**FACTS ABOUT CEREBRAL PALSY**

- *CP is a permanent physical condition that affects movement.*
- *In Australia a child is born with CP every 18 hours.*
- *Australians under 18 are three times more likely to be diagnosed with cerebral palsy than cancer.*
- *There is no pre-birth test, no known cure and severity is on the increase.*
- *For most the cause of CP is unknown.*
- *CP is not a disease, it is not contagious.*
- *CP can be as mild as just a weakness in one hand ranging to almost complete lack of movement.*
- *Since 1951 The Cerebral Palsy Association has forged an enviable reputation as one of the leading disability service providers in WA. In line with the outstanding work we do in the area of CP management and support to those with disability, on 13 March 2007 we adopted a new name The Centre for Cerebral Palsy and colourful new logo.*