



Patch Dolan/Comic Relief

MEET ETHAN

At nine years old, Ethan loves to play football with his school friends and to make others laugh. But when Ethan was a baby, his family noticed a difference in the way he was developing. He couldn't sit up and his left hand and foot were turning in.

At 14 months old, Ethan was diagnosed with bilateral polymicrogyria, a brain condition that has impacted his development. The left side of Ethan's body is weaker than his right, and he requires splints on both his legs and left hand. Ethan is also non-verbal and communicates instead through body language, a digital voice program and Makaton, a sign and symbol language.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Ethan's parents turned to Steps Conductive Education Centre for help with his development. Steps supports children with motor learning difficulties to develop the skills they need to make progress and reach their potential. They also provide parents with the knowledge and strength to understand how they can help their child.

Ethan's mum Laura believes that his ability to walk and sit up is because of the support he has received from Steps. Laura says: "They were able to be so specific to what Ethan needed; you walk out of Steps and you know it's the best thing you can be doing. They teach you how to do it from home, so the work continues every day of the child's life."



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RED NOSE DAY RETURNS!

RED Nose Day returns this month and it seems more important than ever to have some fun, while making a difference. Money raised through Red Nose Day is used to support people living incredibly tough lives in the UK and around the world. This week we learned about Ethan's story.



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THE NEXT STEPS

Ethan attended Steps full-time until he started school this September, only a year later than his classmates.

He now goes to the after-school gym group for older children, called the Gorilla Group, where he does movement tasks, plays football and uses special equipment funded by Comic Relief.

With help from a support worker, Ethan is doing really well at his new school. His mum Laura says: "He takes every opportunity. He rocks up and plays football, and he just fits in with everyone."

A HELPING HAND

Steps Conductive Education Centre supports children under five with motor learning difficulties and runs five days a week. It helps families who may feel isolated and confused by giving them hope and friendship and providing them with the skills they need to help their children at home. Comic Relief funding goes towards specialist sensory and gym equipment. This is used by the centre to help with the children's development and make a difference in their lives.



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RED NOSE DAY

- Red Nose Day hopes to bring the nation together to show just how powerful humour can be through the toughest of times. It has never felt more important to raise smiles and money for those who are struggling, as the impact of COVID-19 brings challenges to many.
- The money raised by Red Nose Day will support people in the UK and around the world, and help tackle child poverty, homelessness, domestic abuse and mental health issues.