

How your support helps us be there for children and young people facing cancer, and their families

**YOUNG LIVES
vs CANCER**

TEAM YOUNG LIVES

SEPTEMBER 2025



**“WITHOUT YOU, THERE
WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN
ANYBODY ELSE TO TURN TO.”**

Ava's mum Katie explains how Young Lives vs Cancer was a game changer.



YOU GAVE ABBIE A HOME FROM HOME

“I can't put into
words how thankful
we are.”



A DAY IN THE LIFE

“It's a privilege to
be there for children
and young people.”



A LASTING LEGACY

“Both our boys
were very special.”

YOU'RE HERE FOR YOUNG LIVES

It's my privilege to stand alongside families as they go through the toughest times. When I met six-year-old Ava and her mum Katie (see pages 4-5), their world had been turned upside down by Ava's cancer diagnosis. Katie felt she had to be strong for Ava and her twin sister Amy, but was struggling to cope emotionally and financially.

Thanks to you I was there for Katie when she needed support the most. That meant helping the family get the financial support available to them, chasing up a delayed wheelchair, and even organising a last-minute family holiday so they could spend some golden time together.

As the stories in Team Young Lives show, your impact is about so much more than practical support. It's about standing with young people and their families, during the hardest time of their lives.

Lisa



Lisa, Young Lives vs Cancer
Specialist Social Worker

YOUR SAY Just some of the very special reasons you support Young Lives vs Cancer.

"My son had Hodgkin lymphoma when he was 20 and his specialist social worker was amazing and made such a difference for us as well. Then my son raised lots of money doing a bike ride as soon as he was better. He's now still well and just about to start a PhD."

**A family previously supported by
Young Lives vs Cancer**

"It's good to know that what I have donated has helped a little towards making life a bit more easier for families, so they can deal with the everyday costs of having to look after a sick child."

Recent donor

"My monthly donation is helping someone somewhere to experience a better life. Keep up the good work that you all do."

Brian, a regular giver

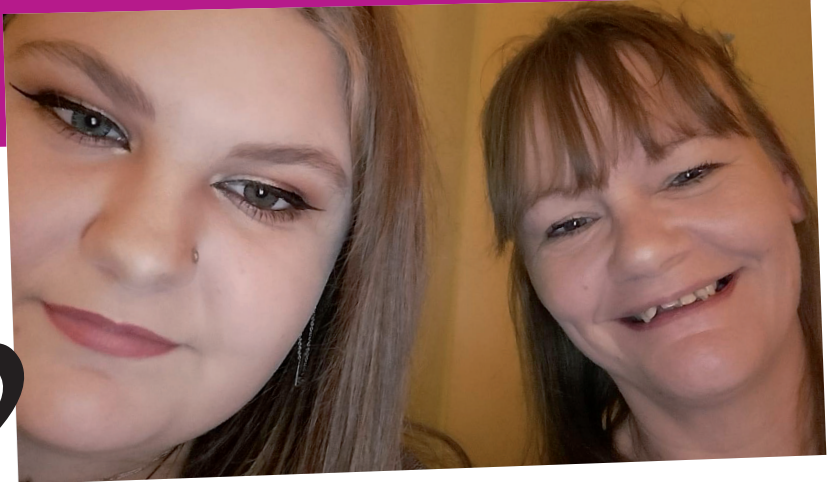


"Billy's House in Nottingham and the social worker supported my grandson and family. They made it possible for the family to stay together, have a break, be close to the hospital, talk to other families, cook and have something like a home from home."

**A family previously supported by
Young Lives vs Cancer**

"YOU GAVE ME A HOME FROM HOME. THANK YOU."

For 19-year-old Abbie, your support meant more than a place to stay during her treatment. You took away her stress and gave her the space to dream big for her future.



"I'm a hands-on person. I work in a care home for elderly dementia patients, and I'm quite crafty too. I make resin earrings and jewellery, and I really enjoy doing nails.

"I have a rare genetic condition that causes tumours in different parts of my body. I remember crying when the surgeon told me one of the tumours was cancer. It was so shocking.

"Quite quickly, I was put in touch with Kate, a specialist social worker from Young Lives vs Cancer. She's been so kind and supportive. I know I can message her whenever I need and she'll help me out.

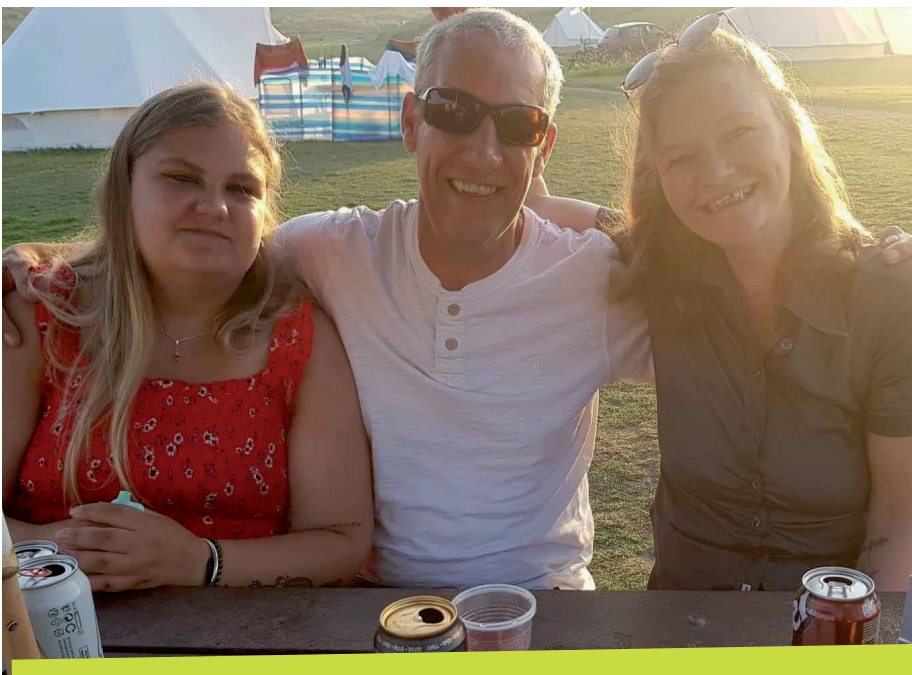
"I live in Guernsey but our hospital is in Southampton, so accommodation and travel has been really expensive. Kate helped us get a financial hardship grant and put me in

touch with other charities so we could pay expenses such as taxis and parking.

"Kate arranged for us to stay at Jean's House, a home for families like ours close to the hospital. It was a home from home – the beds were comfortable, there was plenty of space, and they even had Xboxes. It really eased our stress.

"I can't put into words how thankful we are to supporters like you. You've provided so much comfort and taken a weight off our shoulders."

Now, with you on her side, Abbie is looking to the future with hope – and has plans to open her own nail salon.



"Young Lives vs Cancer took so much weight off our shoulders."

£70

could pay for a night's stay at a Home from Home close to hospital for another young person like Abbie and their family.

YOU'RE HELPING AVA'S FAMILY FACE THE FUTURE

For six-year-old Ava and her mum Katie, your support meant more than practical help – it helped them face the hardest time of their lives.

"Ava's always been a real girly girl," says Katie. "She loves make-up, gymnastics and swimming, like most young girls."

When Ava started getting pains in her side and falling asleep, Katie knew something was wrong. "I had this sinking feeling I had to get this seen," she says. She took Ava straight to A&E and was told she had leukaemia.

"Your life is just turned upside down," says Katie. "In that moment I knew that life would change, but I had no idea quite how much."

Since then, life has been constant hospital appointments and treatment, bringing huge stresses for Ava, her twin sister Amy, and Katie. "I felt like I had to be really strong for everybody but I just couldn't," says Katie. "I was absolutely exhausted."

Money was a worry, too. "My pay started at 100% and then it dropped to 25% over the year so things were definitely tighter," says Katie. There were the extra costs of hospital parking and petrol, as well as rent, food and other family essentials.



Soon after Ava was diagnosed, Katie was put in touch with Lisa, one of our specialist social workers. Lisa helped Katie claim the financial support she was entitled to: "That was huge, because it took the pressure off financially."

But for Katie, what Lisa offered was so much more than practical advice. "With Lisa I could say 'I'm not coping,'" she says. "I could say how I was feeling and what support I needed."

"Lisa was always on the end of the phone. You knew she would pop in and see you, and she was always a friendly face. Without her and Young Lives vs Cancer, there wouldn't have been anybody else to turn to."

Lisa referred Katie to a counsellor, so Katie had the space to talk to someone about what she was going through: "That was a gamechanger". When a wheelchair for Ava was delayed, Lisa chased it up and it arrived soon after.

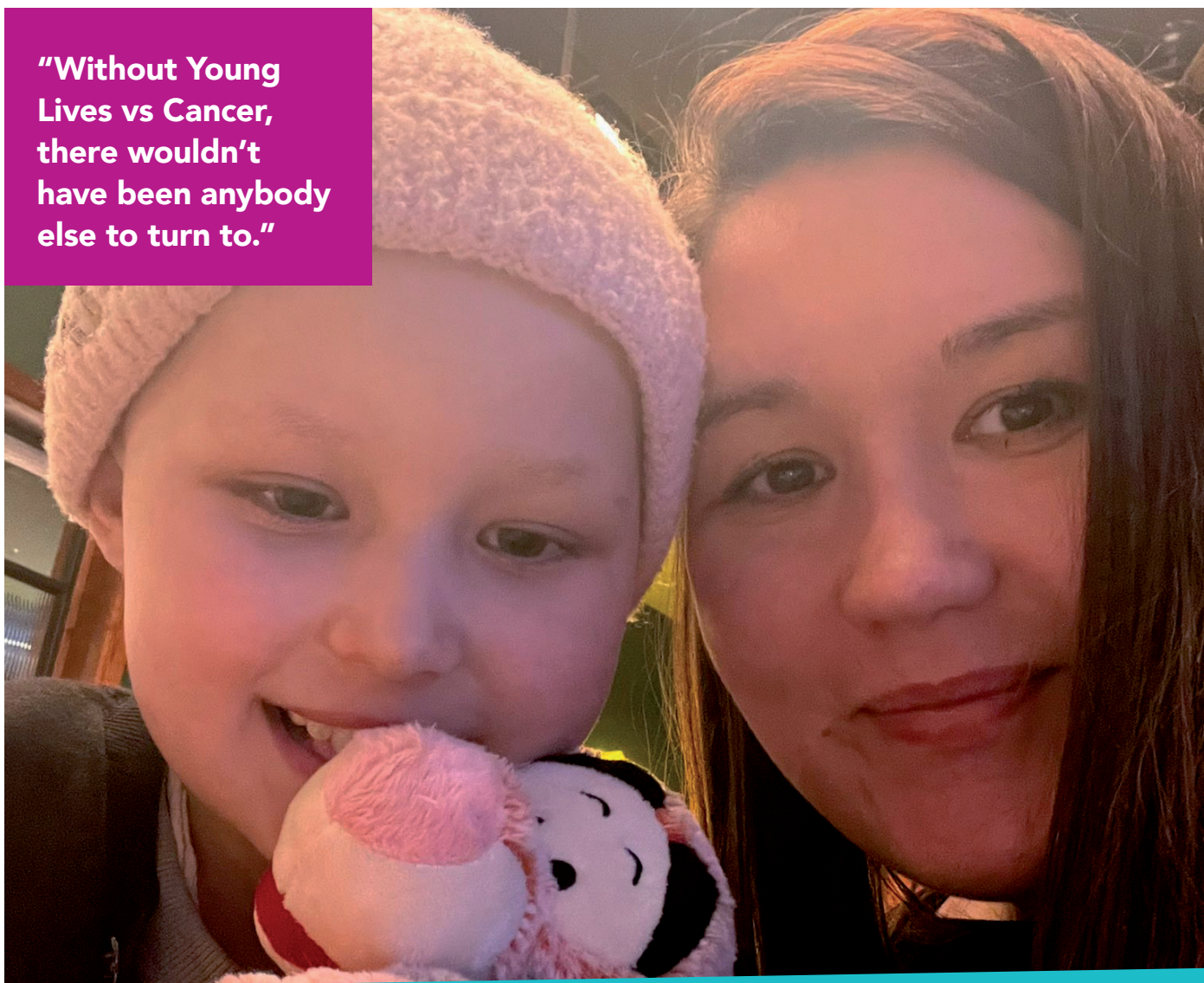
Then, when the uncertainty of Ava's treatments forced Katie to cancel their family summer holiday, Lisa arranged one at the last minute. "It was the best week we had because life was a bit normal," says Katie. "We could relax."

This is the difference your support makes, every day. You give families like Ava's the space and strength they need to face the future. Thank you.



Ava loves make-up, gymnastics and swimming.

"Without Young Lives vs Cancer, there wouldn't have been anybody else to turn to."



£25

could provide an hour of emotional and practical support for a family like Ava's.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ACCOMMODATION MANAGER

I'm Mandy, the Accommodation Manager for Ciaran's House, a Home from Home close to the children's hospital in Edinburgh. It's a free welcoming place to stay during treatment for children and young people and their carers. Thanks to you, we support people from the minute they come in the door.

"A typical day might involve talking to our specialist social workers as soon as a child is diagnosed, to book them a room here. Then we'll invite them to the house for an induction so they can see the spaces for themselves and get a key to their room. From that point on, they can come and go as they need during their treatment.

"With nine families staying here, we have to keep everything very clean to prevent the risk of infection. I'm also responsible for ensuring maintenance, like cleaning the gutters and fixing leaks, is carried out. Last week, we had to remove two wasps nests in the attic, which was scary. A sting for a child with a compromised immune system could be really dangerous.



Ciaran's House, Edinburgh.

"Maintaining the garden is really important to us, too. When a child has been on a ward for months and hasn't felt a blade of grass under their feet, that outside time is so valuable.

"Our number one priority is the families. Sometimes, they may have had a really bad day and just need a shoulder to cry on. As a team of four, we're here to listen, to be by their side, and to respond quickly if there's anything they need.

"I've worked for Young Lives vs Cancer for 24 years, and what keeps me going is the children and young people. It's a privilege to be there for them at such a difficult time in their life. Even though they receive a cancer diagnosis, children keep being children. They're amazing."

FACT:

Children with cancer have to travel an average of 80 miles, often up to five times a week, for hospital treatment.

Young Lives vs Cancer helps families face the financial costs of cancer, like travelling to hospital, but we know more needs to be done. This is why we're also campaigning for a Young Cancer Patient Travel Fund to provide more support. You can find out more on our website: younglivesvscancer.org.uk



Mandy

"OUR BOYS WERE VERY SPECIAL."

Brothers Robbie and Iain Stuart helped to raise nearly £400,000 for Young Lives vs Cancer. Here, their parents, Malcolm and Diane, share their story.

"Our youngest son Robbie had a huge zest for life. He was a massive part of both The Godfathers and Old Bristolian's Rugby Clubs. He wouldn't hesitate to don the 'Brizzley Bear' mascot costume and show off his dance moves after he'd trained the junior teams on a Sunday morning.

"In 2007, Robbie was diagnosed with leukaemia, aged 27. While receiving treatment in hospital, he was inspired by the care Young Lives vs Cancer gave to young kids going through the same gruelling experience.

"With the help of his older brother Iain, Robbie gathered the rugby community to raise funds. A fancy dress dodgeball competition – in honour of Robbie's love of dressing up – was one of many great fundraising successes. After Robbie died, his friends and team-mates continued to fundraise in his memory.

"Robbie's elder brother Iain was a rock during his illness. He was a runner, rower, triathlete and cyclist, even taking a cycling challenge from Geneva to Nice to raise more money for young people living with cancer.

"Sadly, Iain was diagnosed with non-treatable renal cancer in 2020. Even though he had limited time left, he made



the most of it. He was always cheerful and never complained. He fished, painted, and laughed. When he died, he left a gift in his Will to Young Lives vs Cancer as a lasting tribute to his brother.

"Both our boys were very special. We're not only proud of them as human beings but proud to be called their parents."



Malcolm and Diane Stuart with their daughter Helen, together with members of The Godfather's and Old Bristolian's Rugby Clubs.

To date, Iain, Robbie and the rugby community have raised over £370,000 to support children, young people and families living with cancer. As a tribute, we named the garden at CLIC House, a Home from Home close to Bristol Royal Hospital for Children, in their honour.

With a gift in your Will, you can make a lasting difference. Request your free Gifts in Wills guide by emailing giftsinwills@younglivesvscancer.org.uk



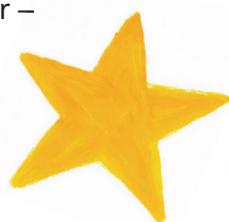
MAKING EVERY LITTLE MOMENT BRIGHTER



You may remember Dzemil, who was just two years old when he was diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumour. **Because of your help, he and his family could find more moments of joy during the hardest days.** With the support of Cath, our specialist support worker, you gave him and his family special moments to breathe, smile and feel like themselves for a while. Like a Magnum ice cream from the hospital shop. It was a tiny joy that made the day brighter, and allowed Dzemil to be a child again, not just a patient. Thank you so much for sharing the little moments and memories that make your day brighter – here's just a small selection.



YOUR TINY JOYS



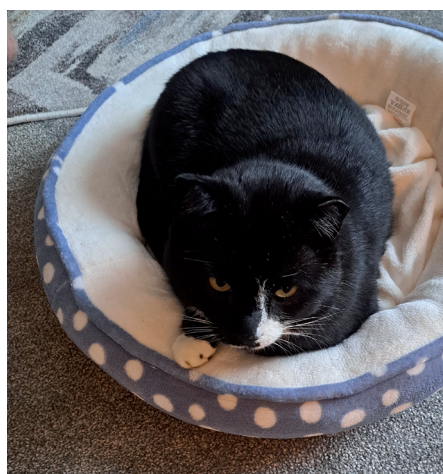
"Hillwalking with my labradoodle Lewis."

Alan



"My first cup of tea in the morning in my favourite mug."

Louise



"My rescue cat Olli makes me smile every day."

Diane

£25

will provide an hour of specialist support, so a family can spend precious moments together. Please fill in your donation form or visit younglivescancer.org/teamyounglives to give now.

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