

## Bex Mezzo – County Special Needs Adviser Report – January 2015.

### Girlguiding Anglia Buddy Award.

This is for members under that age of 26 who regularly support our members with special needs. It was launched at the Cambs East award ceremony. The award information pack is just being "branded" and will be sent to CSNA asap. The applications will do directly to Anna in the Region office, and then to the RSNA. They do not need to go through your county awards committee, but they will be informed of the young person's achievement.

**SMILE 2015** is going back to its roots, by going for a big day out in London. As the STEM activities are being promoted this year, we will be going to the Science Museum and then to another attraction, which may be a boat trip or they eye, but this will be a poll with the attendees. We will ensure accessible transport will be available for all members who wish to attend and the cost will be accessible everyone. The date is going to be in the autumn this year, but to be confirmed over the next couple of weeks (21.1.15).

**SMILE 2016.** We are going to have a weekend adventure next year. We plan to go to Grafham Water. This facility has both indoor and camping accommodation which will be accessible to all. We will be offering water sports and outdoor pursuits. We would like to bring together a team to organise this event. If you are interested in joining this group please let me know.

**Girlguiding Disability Fund** In the last 12 months, we have had successful applications for buddies and carers to attend events in the UK and overseas, hiring a wheelchair for an expedition in the New Forest and 2 bikes to enable 2 girls to take part in their D of E. If people would like to apply, please ask them to send the completed form to Anna who will process it. You need to apply at least 6 weeks before the event.

[https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/members\\_area\\_go/running\\_your\\_unit/funding\\_and\\_fundraising/internal\\_grants/disability\\_fund.aspx](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/members_area_go/running_your_unit/funding_and_fundraising/internal_grants/disability_fund.aspx)

**STOP PRESS: SCARLET FEVER IS CURRENTLY BEING DIAGNOSED LOCALLY – PLEASE BE AWARE OF SYMPTOMS.** Although scarlet fever is usually a mild illness, it is highly contagious with symptoms developing 3-5 days after infection. It should be treated with antibiotics to minimise the risk of complications and reduce the spread to others. The symptoms of scarlet fever include a sore throat, headache, fever, nausea and vomiting. This is followed by a fine red rash which typically first appears on the chest and stomach, rapidly spreading to other parts of the body. On more darkly-pigmented skin, the scarlet rash may be harder to spot, but it should feel like 'sandpaper'. The face can be flushed red but pale around the mouth.

### Chiari Malformation

Chiari malformation is an incurable neurological condition affecting the cerebellum. This is the part of the brain that lies at the back of the head just above the upper end of the spinal cord. It is involved with coordinating movements. The tonsils on the cerebellum drop through the hole in the base of the skull and restrict the flow of cerebrospinal fluid. This causes severe daily headaches (which can interfere with a person's day to day activities) and problems with vision, breathing, swallowing and balance. Foramen magnum decompression surgery and/or duraplasty can have a varying degree of success.

Harry, my Grandson, was diagnosed with Chiari when he was 15 months old, following an MRI scan. He is just 3 years old now and has had decompression surgery twice and, because there was a build-up of pressure in his head, cranial vault expansion. It is very likely that Harry will continue to have ups and downs for his whole life and will require further surgery. He will never know week to week or year to year how he will be and what symptoms may trouble him. He can only enjoy the good times when they come and thank those that help him in the not so good times.

A small charity called The Ann Conroy trust has been a constant source of support to Harry and his family. For further information you can visit their website:

[www.annconroytrust.org/](http://www.annconroytrust.org/)

Alternatively find out more by taking part, completing and gaining a badge for 'Harry's Challenge'. For more details about this please contact Penny or Sue at: [lowfields2@gmail.com](mailto:lowfields2@gmail.com)

Thanks – Julia Winstanley – Division Comm.

If there is something that I can help you, a member of your unit be it a girl or adult member just give me a call, email me, text me. I'm here to help – (we have a disability box you can loan too)

Kind regards Bex Mezzo