

Thomas Takes on a Challenge to Bring Magic to Children this Christmas

Thomas Shepherd, aged 11 from March in Cambridgeshire, is walking 10,000 steps a day in November, to raise money for Family Action's Christmas Toy Appeal.

National charity Family Action, works with more than 60,000 families to help them overcome the challenges they face, through a wide range of practical, emotional and financial support in over 170 community-based services across the country, including pre-schools and FOOD Clubs in Cambridgeshire.

The charity has launched its annual 'Make Theirs Magic' campaign to support families facing hard times, during the festive period, and this Christmas it is looking to distribute thousands of toys to families through the Family Action Toy Appeal.

Thomas saw the Family Action Toy Appeal and decided to take on the challenge to walk 10,000 steps throughout November, looking to raise money for a cause that means a lot to him.

Thomas said: "I wanted to raise money for presents for children that don't get much at Christmas. I found out that Family Action did this, which is why I chose them. I couldn't imagine waking up on Christmas morning and not having presents. I am lucky that my family can afford to give us a great Christmas every year. Children get so excited about Christmas, but some never get to experience the full magic. This is why this challenge means so much to me.

"I am walking 10,000 steps everyday throughout November. I do this through going on walks with my Mum and Dad, doing exercise in PE, going to my kickboxing classes, and we walk around our village. When it's too late to go on a walk, I go into our field and walk round and round until my steps are done. I find it hard some days, after a long day of school and when it's raining, but I really enjoy it otherwise."

David Holmes CBE, Chief Executive of Family Action, said: "It is fantastic that Thomas has set himself this challenge to help Family Action support families this Christmas. Many families struggle with the additional financial and emotional pressures of the festive season and due to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, families who were already facing hardship, must now make impossible decisions, such as whether to heat their home, purchase food or buy their children a present.

"Everyone at Family Action would like to thank Thomas for setting himself this challenge and by walking 10,000 steps every day, Thomas is helping us to ensure that the families we work with will have some magic this Christmas."

Tanya Shepherd, Thomas's mum, said: "We are super proud of Thomas taking on this challenge. He knew exactly what he wanted to do and why. He finds physical activities hard, and doesn't always enjoy it, so when it has meaning - it keeps him motivated."

To donate to Thomas and to help him raise money for Family Action's Toy Appeal visit: [Thomas Shepherd Just Giving](#)

To find out more about Family Action's Make Theirs Magic campaign visit: [Make Theirs Magic](#)

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Notes To Editors

About Family Action

Family Action is a national charity committed to building stronger families and brighter lives. Since the charity was founded in 1869, we have continued to help children and families overcome the challenges they face through a wide range of practical, emotional and financial support. Today we work with more than 60,000 families in some 200 community-based services, as well as supporting thousands more through our national helpline, FamilyLine, which offers free and immediate support to adult family members and national schemes like the National School Breakfast Programme.

We help families and individuals to manage their mental health and wellbeing, working with families to reduce the impact of social isolation, poverty, addiction and other significant sources of stress and pressure. We also support families affected by adoption, special guardianship, separation, special educational needs, disability, domestic violence and sexual abuse. In addition, we provide thousands of welfare and educational grants every year to people in financial crisis.

For further information, please visit our website at www.family-action.org.uk

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