**Press release**

**For immediate release**

**Tenth Big Chocolate Tea party raising funds all month**

This May supporters around the UK are putting on their aprons to help celebrate The Sick Children’s Trust’s tenth annual Big Chocolate Tea. The charity supports families with seriously ill or injured children with free ‘Home from Home’ accommodation, so they can stay close by to their child’s hospital bedside. Fundraising drives such as the Big Chocolate Tea are especially important, as The Sick Children’s Trust relies entirely on donations to run its ten houses.

Throughout the month supporters will be throwing their own Big Chocolate Tea parties in schools, workplaces and in the community, selling sweet chocolatey treats and a cup of tea (or something stronger) to raise vital funds for The Sick Children’s Trust.

It costs £30 to support one family for one night with a private room just moments from their child’s bedside. For the tenth annual Big Chocolate Tea the charity is asking everyone to aim high and raise £300: enough to support a family for ten nights.

Big Chocolate Tea is easy and fun to take part in. All you have to do is visit [sickchildrenstrust.org](http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org) to order your free fundraising pack, then choose a date in May, bake some chocolatey treats, and raise money for The Sick Children’s Trust. There are ideas and tips on how to run a successful Big Chocolate Tea fundraiser at school or at work, as well as posters, bunting, and labels for a variety of cakes, brownies, cookies and more on the website.

First-time and experienced cooks in need of inspiration can find a whole host of chocolatey recipes donated by celebrity chefs, food writers, and Great British Bake Off contestants (among others). These can all be downloaded for free from the charity’s website: [sickchildrenstrust.org/bigchoctea](http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/bigchoctea/)

One of our ‘Homes from Home’, Acorn House in Cambridge held their own Big Chocolate Tea event which included a chocolate tombola and raised over £590 in total. "It was an absolutely lovely morning," said manager Abigail Abdel-aal. "We had tea and cakes with hospital staff and some families who have stayed here. The money raised is so vital to help ensure we can continue to support families when they need us."

Each of The Sick Children’s Trust’s ten ‘Homes from Home’ are moments away from the paediatric wards in the hospitals they support. Having somewhere free to stay nearby removes worries about costs or transport and enables families to be there for their child when they most need it.

Over previous years the Big Chocolate Tea has raised almost £300,000 – enough to fund over nearly 10,000 nights in private family rooms. The Sick Children’s Trust believes that no child should have to face hospital alone without their family by their side, which is why they are asking their supporters to aim big for this year’s Big Chocolate Tea and raise £300 which will go directly to supporting a family for ten nights.

For further information about The Sick Children’s Trust, please visit <http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/>

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<https://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/bigchoctea/>

**Ends**

**For more information**: Please contact [publicity@sickchildrenstrust.org](mailto:publicity@sickchildrenstrust.org)

**Notes to Editors:**

**About The Sick Children’s Trust**

The Sick Children’s Trust is working to a future where every family with a seriously ill child in hospital will be able to stay together, just minutes from their child’s bed during their treatment.

We believe keeping families together significantly improves the recovery of seriously ill children. We provide free, high-quality ‘Home from Home’ accommodation, as well as emotional and practical support, to families with sick children in hospital in the UK.

The Sick Children’s Trust was founded in 1982 by two paediatric specialists Dr Jon Pritchard and Professor James Malpas. Today we have ten ‘Homes from Home’ at major hospitals around the country where families can stay free of charge. Our houses are located in Cambridge, Leeds, London, Newcastle upon Tyne and Sheffield.

We support 4,000 families every year, and there is a growing demand for our ‘Homes from Home’ as children must increasingly travel long distances to get the specialist treatment they need. [www.sickchildrenstrust.org](http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org)