

RAY D'ARCY STEPS OUT FOR IKA'S RUN FOR A LIFE

Popular RTÉ broadcaster Ray D'Arcy stepped out with two lively young transplant recipients for a photocall to highlight the Irish Kidney Association's annual family fun run, 'Run for a Life' (www.runforalife.ie). The charity fundraiser which will take place at Corkagh Park, Dublin 22 on Saturday, 20th May, celebrates the 'gift of life' and aims to raise awareness about the vital importance of organ donation and transplantation.

Ray D'Arcy, an avid runner, donned his favourite running shoes for the photocall along with Shannen Proudfoot (age 10) from Nobber, Co. Meath, who underwent a kidney transplant three years ago thanks to her donor aunt Ann McGivney. Also taking part and representing Children's Liver Disease Ireland (CLDI) was Elizabeth Murphy (age 11) from Ballyboughal, Dublin, who underwent a liver transplant when she was just five months old.

Shannen underwent her kidney transplant operation at Temple Street Hospital while her aunt's kidney donor operation took place at Beaumont Hospital. Shannen brought along her mother Catherine Proudfoot and brothers Luke (9) and James (8) to the photocall. Elizabeth Murphy is celebrating the 10th anniversary of her liver transplant attended with her mother Suzie. Elizabeth transplant took place at King's College Hospital London while she was under the care of Crumlin's Children's Hospital.

'Run for a Life' is open to people of all ages with the option of walking, jogging or running competitively in either a chip timed 2.5km, 5km or 10km distance. Last year's event attracted over 500 participants.

Speaking at the photocall event, Ray D'Arcy said, "I am delighted to lend my support to this fun event and to be joined by Shannen and Elizabeth who are living proof of the success of organ donation. Elizabeth would not be here today were it not for the liver transplant she underwent as a baby. Shannen is enjoying a normal childhood as a result of her aunt donating a kidney to her. She tells me that she loves dancing and gymnastics and is here today doing cartwheels!"

Ray continued, "It is thanks to living and deceased organ donation and our heroic medical teams that close to 3500 people in Ireland are enjoying a second chance at life after receiving heart, lung, liver, kidney or pancreas transplants. I would encourage families to take part in Run for a Life on 20th May in what is a celebration of life".

Elizabeth's mother Suzie explained, "Elizabeth was a gravely ill baby. Were it not for her liver transplant we would not have a daughter today. A deceased donor saved her life ten years ago. I would like to acknowledge the excellent care she has received from Crumlin Children's Hospital and the fantastic team at Kings College in London".

Shannen's mother Catherine said, "the nursing and medical staff at Temple Street have been outstanding down through the years in caring for Shannen. Our family is happy to play a part in helping to highlight Run for a Life and organ donation. Shannen's quality of life has improved considerably since my sister Ann donated a kidney to her. She can now enjoy a normal childhood like her two younger brothers. We were fortunate to have a compatible living donor while hundreds of other people on transplant waiting lists are completely reliant on the generosity of deceased organ donors to give them a second chance at life".

Run for a Life **Race Organiser, Colin White** explained, “Our annual Run for a Life which is now in its ninth year is a great day out for all of the family. The Irish Kidney Association sees this event as a positive way to promote organ donor awareness. We are looking to encourage the public to have a family discussion about organ donation. We greatly value national broadcaster Ray D’Arcy’s endorsement of this event which is very fitting as not only does he share his enjoyment of running, he also has for many years highlighted the importance of organ donation on his radio and tv shows. The support of families who have been touched by organ failure in helping us to promote the event is very much appreciated”.

Entry fee is €20 adult, €10 child and €45 for a family of up to 2 adults and 4 children. **For more information on the event visit website www.runforalife.ie**

For organ donor cards Freetext DONOR to 50050 or visit website www.ika.ie/card You can now download the **IKA’s new digital donor card** by visiting **www.donor.ie** on your smartphone. *Your wishes to be an organ donor can also be included on the new format driving licence which is represented by Code 115.*

-ENDS-

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