



Variety - the Children's Charity of Jersey

Maufant Variety Youth Centre
La Grande Route de St Martin
St Saviour Jersey JE2 7GT

Tel: 01534 856937 **Fax:** 01534 857097
Email: admin@varietyjersey.org.je

Variety at Work Annual Report
For year ended 30th September 2016

At the end of this financial year the total of the requests which have come in via the Health Visitors, the Bridge, schools and other agencies who have direct dealings with families and children are 239 families with 510 children amounting to £42,008. 06. This represents an increase of just over £12,000. since year end 2015. Virtually all of the requests are for single parent families and all of them without exception are very low income families.

Most of the requests are for day to day needs such as food, nappies, milk, uniforms and shoes as well as baby equipment such as cots, buggies and car seats. We have also supplied a washing machine, a cooker, carpets and curtains for children's rooms and helped with children's furniture.

At the request of Brighter Futures we have funded some holiday clubs and play schemes where there have been other problems in the family or when the child is autistic or has Asperger's and continuity of care is desperately important if the child is to maintain social skills. We have helped to pay for 18 school trips to France when parents were unable to pay, hopefully ensuring no child who wishes to go with the rest of the class is left behind.

At the request of the Occupational Therapists we have paid for therapy sessions for a profoundly autistic child and music therapy sessions for a very severely disabled young girl. Again at the request of the senior Occupational Therapist we provided 2 supportive buggies for children with mobility problems and we were delighted to be able to donate £7,000. towards an adapted car for a single parent Mum with a disabled boy who was growing too big for his Mum to lift him in and out of her ordinary car. We also bought an All Terrain Buggy for a young boy who is a pupil at Mont a l'Abbe School to enable him to enjoy the beach, the sand dunes and St. Catherine's Woods. We paid for an indoor trike for children at Mont a l'Abbe School. We donated £2,000. towards a mural in the children's Dental Department and we also donated £500. to Caring Cooks to help parents on low income to provide low cost nourishing meals for their children. We paid for transport for 40 children from Janvrin School to go to a farm to see where some of their food comes from.

Thanks to Chief Barker Robyn Lapidus who always donates the Christmas Party, we entertained 70 children and their parents to tea with entertainment and Santa came to give each child a present. We were offered the opportunity to take 50 children to the Winter Wonderland and we also took 21 children on a train ride following Santa when he came to St.

Helier to switch on the Christmas Lights. This year to coincide with the Variety World Conference we held the I Served the Kids Party during the Conference weekend. Thanks to very generous sponsorship from the Jersey Mutual Insurance Society we were able to have a fantastic party with professional entertainment and all the children went home with appropriate gifts. Again thanks to James Cole the General Manager of the Battle of Flowers funfair we were able to take 70 children to the Funfair and despite the appalling weather the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Every year Barker Steve Wellum donates all the proceeds from his Photographic Baby Competition to Variety. This year it raised the magnificent sum of £3,000. which will be used for special equipment for Eden House which provides respite care for profoundly autistic children

In 2005 Senator Paul Routier as Social Security Minister headed an investigation on poverty in the Island. As a result of that it was noted that it was more expensive for a single parent family to live as opposed to a two parent family and consequently the Single Parent Allowance was introduced. Since that time nothing has changed except that the cost of living has increased. Despite this the States voted to stop paying the Single Parent Allowance as from January this year and there is no doubt that this has caused additional hardship which is noticeable in the increase in the number of requests for help we are receiving. Deputy Richard Renouf has recently conducted another investigation into poverty in the Island and he invited charities to contribute. His full report has now been published and I was pleased to see that other organisations shared my view that discontinuing the Single Parent Allowance has created further hardship. We must all therefore urge our States Members to reinstate this allowance at the earliest opportunity.

For our part as we look forward to our new financial year we must make and take every opportunity to raise further funds if we are to continue to meet the demands for help. We must do our utmost to try to ensure that all children have, as far as is possible, the same opportunities as their peers. For my part I regard it as a huge privilege to be entrusted with this vital aspect of Variety's work and I must thank the Crew, Barkers and Ladies of Variety most sincerely for their support.

Jeanette Pinel
Variety At Work.