

Duck races raise funds for special care babies

A charity which teaches babies and young children to swim held swimming races to raise funds for special care babies.

Turtle Tots Edinburgh and East Lothian raised £11,246 for the charity Simpsons Special Care Babies taking their fundraising four year total to over £20,000.

They held 102 duck races over a week in October. The swimmers aged 12 weeks to five years-old all raised money for the charity which many have had direct contact with in their young lives.

Director of Turtle Tots Edinburgh, Karina commented: "Simpson's Special Care Babies has provided vital support to many of our swimmers, and personally to my friends and family members. With a current fundraising target of £300,000, I was keen that through Turtle Tots, we could help get them a step nearer to that target.

"I'm completely overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and generosity shown by these families. Every single one of our little swimmers has embraced the challenge and have had loads of fun in the process. It's amazing the funds that can be raised when you all pull together."

One of the top fundraisers was Jed Heeps who was supported by the unit when he was born on New Year's Day at 26 weeks, weighing just 2lbs, 2oz.



Jed Heeps, ten months who swims with Turtle Tots in Dalkeith His mum, Cherise Purves said: "We were delighted to support the Turtle Tots Duck Race, even more so since we were raising funds for a charity that means so much to us. The support we received when Jed was in the unit for three months was incredible, in particular from the amazing staff, and we hope that many more families will benefit in the way we did.

"The renovations to improve the facilities for families will make a huge difference. Mums spend a lot of time expressing so having a nice, comfortable space to do that, and to be able to get a snack or cuppa without doing to the canteen, will make such a difference to parents."



Professor Benjamin Stenson, consultant neonatologist and clinical lead for neonatology at the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh Jed Heeps, ten months and his mother, Cherise Purves, who swim with Turtle Tots in Dalkeith Karina Reinhardt, Turtle Tots Edinburgh & East Lothian

Lee Picken, trustee of Simpsons Special Care Babies

Lee Picken, trustee of Simpsons Special Care Babies, added: "Turtle Tots has always been a fantastic supporter of the charity and we were delighted to hear that they had come up with this great fundraising idea.

"The funds they have raised will be put to great use as we look to raise £300,000 to upgrade of parent facilities within the unit.

"We understand the stress and anxiety that having a baby who requires neonatal care places on families and parental well-being is essential at this stressful time. We think these improvements will make an impactful difference to those parents with babies requiring the support of the unit. With this in mind, we hope to reach this target as soon as possible

to get these essential improvements underway.”



Jed Heeps weighed only 2lbs 2oz when he was born on New Year's Day 2019 PHOTO Anna Moffat