

Client: Wessex Heartbeat

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Tina Richardson and Tina Hawke present Ryan Marshall with a 'thank you' heart plaque

Heart patient raises £1,500

AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD boy born with a life-threatening health condition has raised £1,500 for a Hampshire charity.

Ryan Marshall was diagnosed with a critical heart condition four days after his birth.

He was raced to the Wessex Cardiac Centre at Southampton General Hospital for urgent surgery.

He had been diagnosed with pulmonary stenosis - a condition that severely blocks a heart valve.

During this traumatic time, the cardiac charity gave Ryan's parents a room in its 25-bedroom 'home from home' Heartbeat House so they could stay close to their newborn son - a lifeline for the new mum and dad.

He has since taken on a challenge to raise money for the Southampton heart charity.

The youngster walked ten kilometres over six weeks

Tom Orde



with his Year 3 classmates raising a staggering £1,507.50 for Wessex Heartbeat.

Heartbeat House is currently undergoing an £80,000 refurbishment, offers rooms for a single charge of £25, with residents allowed to stay for as long as they need.

There are communal areas for relaxing, socialising and cooking and gives families the chance to give and receive emotional support in what is often an extremely difficult time.

Ryan, who is originally from Bournemouth attends St Walburga's Catholic Primary School.

His father, Daniel Marshall, said: "Being offered accommodation right next to the hospital was a saviour for us. It was a terrible time and

having the stress taken away from us regarding where to stay, was a huge weight off our minds.

"We are so grateful for Wessex Heartbeat's support, and we are so proud of Ryan for taking on this special fundraiser on their behalf."

Not only did Ryan and his classmates take on this magnificent challenge for the extraordinary heart charity, but they also made it their mission to make sure everyone they knew sponsored them, culminating in the tremendous amount of funds handed over to Wessex Heartbeat.

John Munro, chief executive of Wessex Heartbeat, said: "We are so grateful for the money raised by Ryan and his classmates - what an incredible thing for them all to do."

"Our utmost priority is to ensure that heart patients and their families are treated with the best possible care and support."