

Why we urgently need hero Puppy Sponsors like you!

Right now there are hundreds of families like Josh's all over Ireland, who urgently need your help.

Our Assistance Dog programme has always been oversubscribed, and in fact, we had to stop accepting new applications for a period. Fortunately, thanks to the help of our generous supporters, we were able to begin

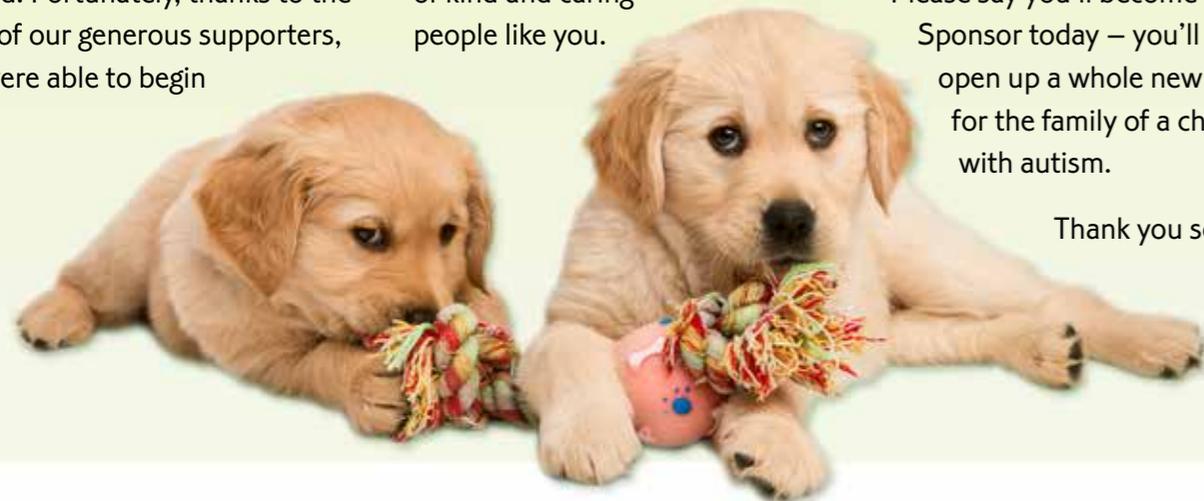
accepting new applications in January this year.

But in order to keep up with demand, and to keep on training the Assistance Dogs that children like Josh so desperately need, we need the urgent help of kind and caring people like you.

It takes two years to fully train an Assistance Dog like Flora, with a total working-life cost of 38,000. And we now have a 3 year waiting list. So as you can see, we desperately need new heroic Puppy Sponsors like you.

Please say you'll become a Puppy Sponsor today – you'll help to open up a whole new world for the family of a child with autism.

Thank you so much!



Your Paw-by-Paw guide to Puppy Sponsorship...

It takes special people to help us put pups like Zara through their paces, train them, raise them and turn them into working Assistance Dogs.

Special people like you... our loyal band of Puppy Pals.

As an official Puppy Pal, you'll be kept fully up to date with the Puppy Training Process and Zara's personal progress – from weaning, through training, right up until the time she's paired with a family like Josh's.

Here's a brief run down of what you can expect to receive from us:

- Your personal Puppy Sponsor Welcome Pack including your Puppy Sponsor certificate and 'Puppy Pals' bumper sticker.
- Regular mail and email updates from Zara including photos and online video snapshots of her in training.

- The "Wagazine" our annual supporters newsletter.
- Regular "Training Updates".

We want you to enjoy seeing Zara grow to fulfil her dreams. The dreams you can make possible through your Puppy Sponsorship today. Thank you so much!

It takes a HERO to make a HERO!
Please will you sponsor a puppy for just €1.50 week?



irish guide dogs
for the blind

National Headquarters & Training Centre, Model Farm Road, Cork.

Tel 021 487 8200 Callsave 1850 506 300 Fax 021 487 4152
info@guidedogs.ie www.guidedogs.ie Charity No CHY 6006

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Flora & Josh



We hope you enjoyed Zara's letter to you. She's a real sweetie isn't she? We thought you might also like to read about the amazing impact an Assistance Dog can have on the family of a child with autism. Find out more inside...

What a hero like Flora means to a child with autism...

“Our Assistance Dog Flora completely changed all our lives, thanks to people like you.” by [Mother’s Name]



My son Josh was diagnosed with autism in May 2010 when he was 2 years old. Autism was not completely new to our family though, because my sister had previously had two sons diagnosed. I was very lucky to have her support. In fact it was my sister who first mentioned Assistance Dogs to me.

I have to admit, we had our reservations. Josh is a sensitive and nervous child, and taking on a dog is a big challenge. As my husband said: “We have three

children in nappies, do you really want to be cleaning up more poop?!”

However, we went ahead and made our application, and after a [two] year wait, Flora came into our home.

Flora is a really important part of our family now, and she’s had a very positive effect on Josh. For example, every afternoon, Josh would come in from school and

have a meltdown. But since we got Flora, they run to each other the minute he comes in the door. The afternoon meltdown has gone.

In fact, Flora comes over and interrupts any meltdown Josh has by nosing at him or licking his face. He’s snapped out of the meltdowns quicker and quicker

to the point where now they rarely happen.

Josh also used to have a lot of ‘echolalia’, repeating what people say to him, and ‘scripting’ repeating the same phrases over and over. But we’ve noticed that Josh talks to Flora in a more appropriate way, without scripting and repeating.

Life in general has become so much better for us all. Before Flora came along we’d hardly ever go

out. Exposing Josh to new environments could cause a sensory overload for him. And we couldn’t let him walk on his own because of the constant risk of bolting so we just used to stay at home.

But now Josh likes being out with Flora. He’s more confident and much easier to control. He stays with her, so if he wants to explore, we can easily call him back by commanding Flora to return.

Also, Josh is so much safer because of Flora. One day, Flora was in the garden with Josh when I heard her barking. It was the first time I’d heard her bark, so it got my attention. Flora was at the bottom of the

If you Sponsor a Puppy today, you’ll help another child like Josh to have a hero like Flora in his life. Thank you!



About Autism...

- A developmental disorder that usually appears by the age of 3.
- Features impaired communication and social skills.
- Children have an inability to filter the sights and sounds around them.
- This can cause sensory overload and immense frustration.
- The result leaves children living ‘locked in’ in a world of their own.
- Bolting, ‘meltdowns’, and an inability to communicate are common.



ladder barking and barking at Josh who was standing upright at the top of the.

It was as if she was telling him to get down, and the second he got down, she stopped. Josh is a climber, so this wasn’t the last time she protected him in this way.

All round, in every aspect of our lives as a family, Flora has made things better. We’re all calmer and more relaxed. We’re all happier. And the six of us are now living life the way every family should.

Thank you Irish Guide Dogs!

What exactly is an Assistance Dog?

Assistance Dogs are specially trained to work with children with autism. Constant companions who have a dramatic impact on the behaviour and quality of life of children like Josh.

- Outings to public places become less stressful
- Families enjoy greater freedom and mobility
- Children grow in confidence and sense of responsibility
- Often they begin speaking and opening up to others.
- The world becomes a less threatening and dangerous place

Your Puppy Sponsorship will change a child’s life in the most wonderful way you can imagine. **Thank you!**

