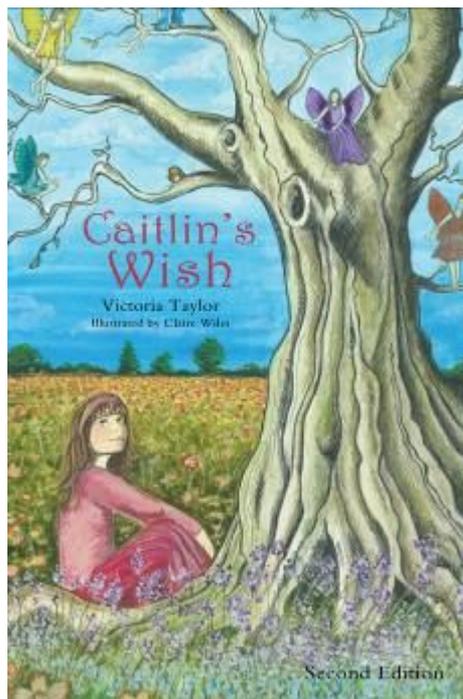


Caitlin's Wish is an enchanting and moving story based on real life events; an inspiring tale of triumph over adversity.



It follows one little girl's journey as she comes to terms with her father's life - changing illness.

Unable to accept all the changes in her life, Caitlin cries to herself "Why me? Why my family?"

She hides her true feelings from everyone around her, only confiding in the little robin who sits on her windowsill each day. She pours her heart out to him, completely unaware of his extraordinary magical abilities.

Rufus the robin arranges a magical trip for Caitlin; to an enchanted world where anything is possible. Join Caitlin on this magical adventure to Fairyland where she re-discovers her happiness and learns to see life from a new perspective. Once you've read 'Caitlin's Wish' you'll never see life in the same way again.

So what is 'Caitlin's Wish / Young Carers Awareness Campaign', and how did it all start, you may wonder..... Here Victoria explains

"I created the original story 'Caitlin's Wish' to help my daughter Adele-Caitlin come to terms with her Father's disability. He was diagnosed with a rare neurological condition, I.H. (Intracranial Hypertension) when she was very young. It wasn't until she went to school that she realised her life was different. Her friends were too young to comprehend what her life as a young carer was really like which left Adele-Caitlin feeling sad and alone. She was too young to access any support, so I decided to put pen to paper to try and make a difference. The result was the original Caitlin's Wish. The book changed my daughter's outlook on life so drastically that we made the decision to publish it, in the hope that it might help other children in similar circumstances.

That was 5 years ago now and after publishing the original book in 2010, we soon discovered that it was being read by all ages and not just by younger children as it had been originally intended. Our readers ranged from 2 yrs old - 95 yrs old!

Indeed whole families were using the book to open the discussions into their own personal circumstances. So many people contacted me to thank me for writing the book and explaining that their children had gone through exactly the same experiences as my Adele. They had felt completely isolated, misunderstood and alone when they had started school, which is heartbreaking to think of any young child feeling that way. These children are innocently affected by their family circumstances and all too often they are overlooked; the focus tends to be on the sick / disabled family member and the children are often forgotten.

I decided to learn more about how Young Carers were supported in society, especially in education. I began liaising with Karl Napieralla OBE, Director of Education for Neath Port Talbot and the Neath Port Talbot Young Carers Forum and it was during this time that I first learned about the Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Children's Society's Schools Resource

pack. It's a free to download resource for any school to use to support Young Carers. It not only raises awareness of Young Carers issues amongst schoolchildren, but also guides teachers how to identify and support any young carers in their school. Mr Karl Napieralla OBE, has provided copies of Caitlin's Wish (Second Edition) to all schools and libraries in the Neath Port Talbot area of Wales and is recommending it's used in conjunction with the Schools Resource pack to help all children understand what it's like to be a young carer.

The 2001 census stated that there are 175, 000 Young Carers in the UK, but recent research suggests that the figure is closer to 700,000 with an estimated 2/3 of Young Carers being bullied in schools. We feel that if there was more awareness of Young Carers issues within society then this would lead to greater empathy, compassion, tolerance and understanding from those not personally affected by illness or disability in any way. In turn this would lead to Young Carers having a better chance of receiving the support they need to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives.

In 2011 we decided to create a Second Edition of Caitlin's Wish; completely re-written and based on the original story, the Second edition is suitable for all ages. Claire Wiles created some new illustrations to add to the originals, as well as a beautiful new front cover design. April 24<sup>th</sup> 2012 marked the beginning of a new chapter in our journey when we launched Caitlin's Wish (Second Edition) at a Young Carers Awareness event held at the Gwyn Hall Theatre, Neath. It wasn't just the launch of a new book though; it was the launch of an ongoing campaign to raise awareness for Young Careers in society.

It's our hope that one day all schools will support Young Carers by using the Schools resource pack or similar resources, and the general public will have more understanding and respect for the role that young carers play within society. Awareness can make this happen. Young carers are inspirational young people doing a difficult job and they need our support! "

### Caitlin's Wish Theatre in Education Project...

The Caitlin's Wish TIE project is the brain child of Clare Dooley and Andy Kellett. Victoria and Clare have been friends since childhood, and Clare has seen the impact that IH has had on Victoria's family over the years. When the first book was published, they began discussing a possible theatre in education project and 2 years later it's happening! The project have created a play based on the Caitlin's Wish story to take into UK schools, to raise awareness of Young Carers issues which will lead to greater understanding, tolerance and compassion amongst school children of all ages.

As well as being an Author, Carer, and Young Carers awareness campaigner Victoria is also a volunteer with the IH Research Foundation. She adds "I.H. is an invisible condition where the person looks 'fine' when they're not! Chronic IH is a serious neurological disorder which causes excruciating pain, severe headaches, vision loss, blindness and life - altering disability. Most people have never even heard of it, including many in the medical profession which is why raising awareness is so important. For more information please go to the IH Research Foundation's website. ([www.ihrfoundation.org](http://www.ihrfoundation.org))"

“Caitlin’s Wish is an imaginative book beautifully illustrated that can be a fun family read and a terrific resource in schools and youth settings to ensure that all young people have a better understanding of the road travelled by young people with caring responsibilities.

Carers Trust is delighted to be linked to this publication and would encourage everyone to buy their own copy and then get one to pass on to friends and family”

**Angela Roberts,  
Director of Wales, Carers Trust.**



Rhydian’s message....

“I just want to say how amazing I think this whole Caitlin’s Wish project is. Victoria has worked ever so hard on it. I’m just sorry I can’t be there to celebrate the launch, but I wish it well.

It’s a fantastic book, everyone’s going to love it; especially children. I think it really is a great insight into the life of a young carer – It’s great!

I’m very proud to be associated with it. My mother is a huge fan of this book, and she’s managing Director of Crossroads Wales.

Congratulations to everybody involved, particularly Victoria and of course the lady who it’s about really; Adele.

God Bless You!”

**Rhydian Roberts**





"Caitlin's Wish is a beautifully illustrated, inspirational book written by a lady devoted to her family and determined to help others. Having known the family personally for many years, long before Rob was diagnosed with IH, I've seen how they've come to terms with this life changing illness, now turning it into something so positive to help others.

I am happy to endorse 'Caitlin's Wish' as a book that will support many families facing the uncertainty that disability and illness brings. All too often the children are overlooked and the focus is on the disabled/ sick family member. Caitlin's Wish helps those children to look for the positives in their lives and understand that they're not alone."

**Bonnie Tyler.**



"Even the concept of Young Carers was new to me when I first got involved with some of our local Carers groups. The idea that children, some under the age of 8, are caring for family members on a daily basis, was mind-blowing to me. Many have no support and often are unaware themselves that they are doing the work of a Carer.

There are so many aspects of these children's lives that need a light shone on them - helping them to identify themselves as Carers in the first place, letting them know what help and support is available, making that support accessible to them, addressing the stigma that children can feel about being young Carers.

All of this can be helped by raising awareness within our communities of this, all too often, hidden world.

Together, let us do all we can to let these children know that they are not alone, that they have our support and that the future can be hopeful and full of promise.

Please give Victoria my best wishes and I hope the launch is a great success."

**Michael Sheen OBE**

"What happens when a parent becomes ill? Victoria Taylor has taken her own family's experiences with chronic intracranial hypertension (IH) and written an imaginative tale, with love, insight, and gentle reassurance. Caitlin's Wish is a delight to read and look at, with watercolor illustrations of a magical world. It helps families and educators navigate the uncertainty of chronic illness and guide children in a creative and loving way.

Add Caitlin's Wish to your gift list; it should be part of every child's library."

**Emanuel Tanne, M.D. Co-Founder and President,  
Intracranial Hypertension Research Foundation,  
USA**





A message from the Tanne family.... “Thank you for creating such a beautiful book that has brought comfort to many families struggling with chronic intracranial hypertension. One of the scariest situations for any child is to see a parent ill; you’ve been able to transform your own family’s experiences into Caitlin’s wish, a gently reassuring book that is full of hope.”

“Vicki, thank you so much for your support and your efforts to raise awareness of chronic IH. Most people with this painful illness suffer in silence, because so few know about it. As a committed, passionate IHRF volunteer, you have made it your mission to raise awareness of chronic IH and help improve the lives of people impacted by this life-altering disorder. If we could choose one word to describe Vicki, it would be “Hopeful”. Christopher Reeve once said, “Once you choose hope, anything is possible.” Vicki is living proof of that idea.

Congratulations Vicki, and thank you so much, on behalf of the Intracranial Hypertension Research Foundation, our family and all families who are searching for answers for their loved ones with Chronic IH.”

**Emanuel, Amy and Jessica Tanne**

“Caitlin’s wish is an imaginative, thought provoking book which is beautifully illustrated. It makes a perfect resource for schools to use in conjunction with the ‘Princess Royal Trust for Carers’ schools resource pack.

Reading Caitlin’s wish will enable young people to gain a better understanding of what being a young carer is really like. Furthermore reading it will encourage greater empathy, respect and tolerance from all ages who are not personally affected by illness or disability themselves.

I am delighted to say that Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council has ordered copies of this book for circulation in its libraries and schools.”



**Karl Napieralla OBE,  
Director of Education, Leisure  
and Lifelong Learning, Neath  
Port Talbot, Wales, UK**

“Caitlin’s wish is a beautiful book with a very powerful message for both children and adults. Young carers are often carrying huge burdens, but go unrecognised and unsupported. Caitlin’s wish is a great resource that will initiate discussion, sharing and understanding.”

**Lynne Hill, Policy Director, Children in Wales. ( [www.childreninwales.org](http://www.childreninwales.org) )**

“Caitlin’s Wish is an enchanting and very moving story which really engages the reader and is appealing on many different levels. It is a good starting point for discussion with older children on the topics of having an optimistic outlook on illness and disability within the family and of course being a young carer. For young carers or those living at home with a disabled person it highlights that they are not alone, other families face similar situations. Equally, it is a lovely gentle tale to have read out loud at story time to younger children who will enjoy the colourful illustrations. Children of all ages who hear or read this story will remember it and the messages it conveys for a very long time.

The Neath Port Talbot Young Carers Forum which is made up of representatives from agencies that are concerned with the issues facing young carers and their families, whole heartedly supports Caitlin’s Wish as a resource that raises awareness of the needs of young carers and issues of disability.”

**Neath Port Talbot Young Carers Forum  
Wales, UK.**



2012/0023092POTL

**Tim Loughton MP**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT

tel: 0370 0002288 ministers@education.gov.uk

Ms Victoria Taylor

24 April 2012

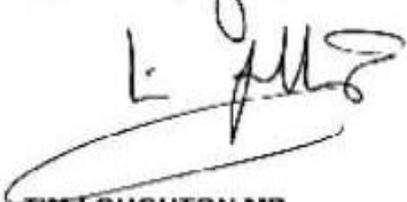
Dear Victoria,

Thank you for your email of 11 April, informing me about the launch of your campaign to raise awareness of the schools resource pack on young carers.

I am a long-term supporter of this excellent resource produced by the Princess Royal Trust for Carers and the Children's Society. Last year this Department funded the development of the schools e-learning module that forms part of this resource. I have met many young carers and I am always inspired by what they have achieved and their commitment to the family members they support.

The Government thinks that it is very important that young carers are supported properly, not least that they are supported at school so that they can achieve their full potential. We want everyone in local authorities, schools and charities to work together to identify young people who are carers and to offer them the right help and advice to ensure they do not undertake excessive or harmful caring responsibilities.

The launch of the book, *Caitlin's Wish*, will bring the experience of life as a young carer to the attention of a much wider audience. I hope and trust that it will help young carers to receive the understanding and support they need.

With very best wishes,  
  
TIM LOUGHTON MP

Honest, heartfelt and above all honest, Caitlin's Wish is a great read and an invaluable resource for any child adjusting to life with a sick relative. An inspiring, important story.

**Cathy Cassidy, Author.**

"As I read Caitlin's Wish I was very moved by the concepts the book touches on. Illness has an impact on everyone in the family. Seeing my children impacted by my illness was incredibly challenging.

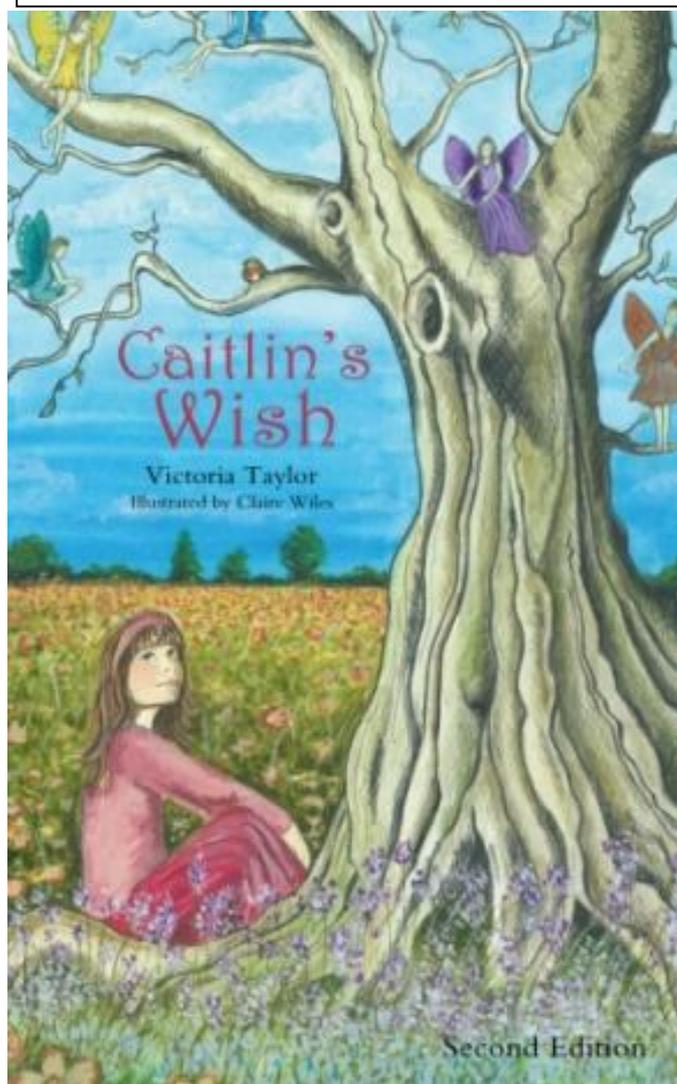
The book does a fantastic job of taking those experiences and examining them in a way that is easy to look at, and it will definitely promote discussion between parents and children.

Caitlin's Wish offers youth imagery that is pleasant and age appropriate while providing a rare insight into the developmental psyche of young carers. The concepts will universally resonate in families experiencing illness."

**Kim Latour,**

**Parent Representative, Young Carers Canada**

To see more endorsements, and for more information please go to the Caitlin's Wish website [www.caitlinswish.co.uk](http://www.caitlinswish.co.uk)



Victoria Taylor and Claire Wiles  
Author & Illustrator of Caitlin's Wish

Signed copies of Caitlin's Wish - Second Edition are available from the website

[www.caitlinswish.co.uk](http://www.caitlinswish.co.uk) at a reduced price of £8-00 & postage.

(25% of the paperback royalties go to the IH Research Foundation and SNPT Crossroads Care Young Carers Project.)

Caitlin's Wish is also available as an E book  
Priced at £5.50 rrp

Princess Royal Trust for Carers & Children's Society's **SCHOOLS RESOURCE PACK** - <http://professionals.carers.org/young-carers/articles/schools-resource-pack,6282,PR.html>