



PRESS RELEASEPRESS RELEASE***

Dartmoor Zoo Provide Magical Memories For Some of Plymouth's Most Deserving Families

On Saturday 6th September Dartmoor Zoo provided a day of entertainment for Jeremiah's Journey Stepping Stones Project, which supports children who have a parent with a terminal illness.

During term time the children and young people meet on a bi-weekly basis, but this summer the local charity provided days trips for the whole family, not only allowing children to cement friendships, but giving families the opportunity to come together, share stories and make new friends.

Kim Higham, Stepping Stones Project Coordinator said "Over the summer we are so proud to have provided our families with such a variety of day trips – Clayart Café, the National Marine Aquarium and Dartmoor Zoo have all been so generous in supporting us in this way. Both physically and emotionally it is not been easy for some of our families to attend, when someone is very ill getting up and ready for the day can be exhausting, but all of the families wanted to get involved and show such passion for the project as it has made a difference to their children. Each trip has provided wonderful experiences that families will remember and hold on to in the future when times are difficult. It has been a pleasure to see our families come together and show support for each other."

Benjamin Mee, Owner of Dartmoor Zoo said "I was delighted to see so many families from Stepping Stones enjoying meeting up and being at the zoo. Our family has been along the same journey they are making, which makes it particularly rewarding for us to see the zoo helping to bring these families together. The animals and the park environment are perfect for allowing people to relax and enjoy the present moment."

Rachel Lacey, Jeremiah's Journey Project Coordinator attended the day and added "The children absolutely loved the Zoo – particularly the enrichment tasks with the racoons and they were all in love with the meerkats. One of the boys even gave a speech about the tigers to the whole group, he was really excited and very knowledgeable; the team at the

Zoo were fantastic in supporting him doing this. This was the first time I met some of the Stepping Stones families and it was wonderful to see just how much the group means to them. It was lovely to see them having fun and supporting each other, children and adults alike”

Most importantly – here is what the children had to say about their day out!

“It was awesome, watching the lions being fed was the best bit of the day. It was super nice having a day out as a family” **Gabby**

“It has been a really fun and eventful day and I enjoyed it all” **Eve**

“We went around the Zoo with the staff and found out lots of facts! Making food bags for the animals was my best bit of the day. It’s always good to have a day out as a family” **Will**

The team at Jeremiah’s Journey would like to thank Benjamin Mee and all of the team at Dartmoor Zoo for their kindness and support.

To find out more about Jeremiah’s Journey please visit: www.jeremiahsjourney.org.uk or get in touch with Leila on 01752 424348 or email leila@jeremiahsjourney.org.uk.

To find out more about Dartmoor Zoo please visit www.dartmoorzoo.org.uk

Please see the attached group photo – we have other professional supporting images if required.

Dates for Your Diary

Sat 27 th September	Photomathon	FIRST EVER EVENT IN PLYMOUTH
Sun 28 th September	Superhero Skydive	Dunkeswell Airfield
Sat 11 th October	Moulin Rouge Ball SOLD OUT	The Duke of Cornwall, Plymouth
Sun 2 nd November	Plymouth 10K	Plymouth City Centre

ENDS

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Notes for Editors:

- 1, Jeremiah's Journey was founded in 1996
- 2, Each year Jeremiah's Journey supports approx. 220 bereaved children and their families in Plymouth and the immediate surrounding area.
- 3, The children who use our service are anticipating or have experienced the death of someone special, the majority of our children have lost a parent.
- 4, We support families who have been bereaved through a variety of circumstances including long term illness and sudden and often traumatic events such as road traffic accidents and suicide. We offer support in a variety of ways and always listen to what the family need.
- 5, We offer short term therapeutic group programmes which we run in partnership with Plymouth College of Art. This means that we are able to offer a safe space for children to: express their feelings of grief; share memories of their special person; and explore ways of coping.
- 6, With the support of Comic Relief, we have been able to develop a new project called Stepping Stones, which provides support to young people who have a parent with a terminal illness.
- 7, Sadly our service is one that will always be needed. As a self-funded charity we can only support local families with the generosity of our community. We want to be there for every child who needs our service; we believe that no child or family should feel alone in their grief.

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