

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY PROSTHETICS Case study 6



David* – Age 12

Proximal Femoral Focal Deficiency



David is a 12 year old boy who received his activity blade earlier in the year, through the Children's Activity Prosthetic Fund. He now carries it to school in a bag, to change into during sporting activities at school.

He was born in Thailand with Proximal Femoral Focal Deficiency, classification D. Due to a lack of understanding and medical support in Thailand, the family returned to the UK when David was sixteen months old.

As a younger child he used to run and play football on his much shorter limb without a prosthesis. However due to the onset of spine curvature, he can no longer participate in sport without a prosthesis or in a sports wheelchair.

He has undergone three surgeries for limb lengthening over the years. Earlier this year David decided that he no longer wished to proceed with any further surgery. He now wears a prosthetic leg everyday to go to school. It was this decision that led the family to investigate the best possible prostheses available, for him to continue his life to the full.

David has two older siblings. The whole family went through many changes when he was born, including relocation to the UK. It has been difficult for his siblings during periods of reconstruction when much of the parents time and attention has been focused on David. The whole family has experienced extremely stressful and emotionally draining periods over the years.

David is an active and sporty child who has had to accept some disappointments, including not being able to participate in sports at school. However as result he became involved in wheelchair sports. He currently plays for a wheelchair basketball team and plays wheelchair tennis four times a week. In the last year he has won the British Nationals, The British Open and gold and bronze medals at the National School Game.

David received an activity blade this year, enabling him to start participating in sport activities at school. His parents have described the changes since he has received his activity blade as not only the obvious physical benefits but David has also had a complete change in his mental attitude and confidence. He has a far wider group of friends and is happier in himself. This has had direct impact on the whole family, as he is able to join in with family activities more easily and there is less stress and worry within the family to his welfare.

He now takes part in school PE lessons including football, tennis, rugby, hockey, badminton, cricket, benchball, athletics and cross country.

He is now able to go out with friends scootering, going to the shops, playing in the park, going into town, climbing. He is able to enjoy long family walks, festivals, beach games, badminton and football with his siblings. His new found confidence has also enabled him to take part in an outdoor learning residential with school enjoying orienteering, team-building activities etc.

The whole family feel that a new chapter has begun and now feel able to offer support an advice to families who are on

the same path. They have overcome difficulties and obstacles by treating him as normal as possible whilst embracing his disability and encouraging him to follow suit. They have encouraged him to try as many activities as possible including those he can do that are not affected by disability, such as playing an instrument and to take part in those activities that embrace his disability such as wheelchair sports.

David is not shy of his disability, he is well known and popular with other children in the area. He does not try to hide his prosthesis and is particularly proud of his blade prosthesis, wearing it openly on show when going out with friends at the local park, playing football or climbing trees! He has a full and complete life enhanced by the introduction of an activity prosthesis, which enables him to participate in many more activities, avoiding any sense of isolation.

This child received their activity prosthesis through the Children's Prosthetic Fund from the Department of Health and administered by LimbPower. Please ask your Limb Centre if you want to know more about how to access this fund.

**Please note that the names of the children have been changed to protect their identities.*

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