



## **“Thank you” to SCC from Freedom Wheels**

Christmas is just around the corner and thanks to your wonderful support at Ride for a Reason the Freedom Wheels workshop has been very busy with new bikes being built just in time for the holidays.

Freedom Wheels has delivered 51 bikes to children with disabilities since July. That's 51 courageous kids taking on a new challenge, being independent, developing confidence and socialising with peers this summer.

It is remarkable what we can achieve when we come together as a team and Sydney Cycling Club's donation of \$25,000 is an outstanding example! Thanks to you, Freedom Wheels can give free therapeutic assessments and financial support/subsidies to brave children and their families.

The first time I saw a child cautiously helped from his wheelchair and onto a custom trial bike during an assessment brought tears to my eyes.

The assessment was with a young boy who had cerebral palsy. His older brother had also come along to the appointment. Mum explained that the older boy had a bike and that the younger child was fascinated watching his brother riding and desperately wanted to join in.

Our therapist Jess was crouched on the floor gently inspecting the child's legs, chatting in a friendly tone about how tall and strong they were. Although the boy was non-verbal he smiled cheekily and seemed impressed with this.

With her tape measure and spanners at the ready, Jess put the Freedom Wheels bike together with precision. Once in the saddle, it took the young man a moment to warm up but the stiffness in his knees softened as he relaxed with the rhythm of turning the pedals.

Jess slowly wheeled the bike in a large circle, the boy was smiling and his eyes shining. Mum was taking photos and asking lots of questions. The older brother was growing restless and began messing about alongside the bike.

Jess had stopped to talk to mum and it was at this moment that the young boy determined to keep moving realised he could push the pedals himself, and with one great push, the bike moved forward nearly clipping the heels of the older brother.../2



... and although he was not at first impressed, both kids erupted into laughter and it became a game of chasies.

I was astonished, a child less than five years old who couldn't walk had just learnt to pedal a bike for the first time. And although he was non-verbal he was laughing with his brother, no doubt sharing a memory that could be carried into their adult lives. And yes, I had to wipe away a tear! We couldn't make moments like these without people like you.

Your efforts bring moments like this to real children and real families living with disability. We are so grateful for your support and I know that these people are too. Isn't it fabulous that through doing the activities we love, we are also able to help others in need? Thank you!

You can take great pride in this accomplishment and I hope it brings you motivation for your next big ride!

I wish you all a very happy holiday,  
*Miranda Unicomb, Development Officer, Freedom Wheels*  
*December 2017*

*Pictured below: TAD Occupational Therapist Ben Teh and Freedom Wheels Coordinator Mary Martin preparing for special Christmas bike deliveries.*

