



Please Go And Enjoy Your Life. Danny Did. ®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Chicago Blackhawks to Support Epilepsy Awareness Month at November 15th Game

Local Woman Reaches Out and Stanley Cup Champions Take Action

November 13, 2015 – Chicago, IL – The Chicago Blackhawks will recognize National Epilepsy Awareness Month during their November 15th game versus the Calgary Flames. Epilepsy is a neurological disease characterized by recurrent seizures that is projected to impact 1 in 26 Americans over a lifetime, per the Institute of Medicine.

The Blackhawks were motivated to advocate by Erin Gard, a Chicago-area native who has suffered from epilepsy since the age of 8. Now 24, Gard took action to raise awareness after years of keeping her journey private. Her first move was to contact Chicago Blackhawks Chairman Rocky Wirtz.

“My name is Erin Gard and I am a massive fan of the Blackhawks,” Gard wrote to Wirtz. “I’m writing to you not to ask for a signed picture or puck, but something more important to me. I am trying to get epilepsy awareness into sports so not just some people, but everyone will know about epilepsy. So many are starting with the NFL, but I wanted to be the first to get the NHL to show support for epilepsy during November. This is very important to me because I’ve had epilepsy since I was 8 and I’m 24 now. I was hoping the Hawks could be the first to show support and help to spread awareness.”

The Blackhawks responded by inviting Gard to have two advocacy organizations close to her – the Danny Did Foundation (DDF) and the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Chicago (EFGC) – to provide information on epilepsy at Sunday’s game. Each will distribute educational materials in the concourse near section 107. The team will also promote each cause on the United Center scoreboard, and donate proceeds from the silent auction held during the game.

“When I read her hand-written letter, I knew this was a young woman who is ready to make a positive impact,” said Wirtz. “Her courage in raising the public profile for a disease that impacts her personally had a big effect on me. The Blackhawks are happy to partner with Erin and these two Chicago-based nonprofits.”

“Epilepsy is a disease that can strike any person at any age, but has a low degree of understanding among the public,” said Tom Stanton, Executive Director of the Danny Did Foundation. “Erin’s bravery in reaching out and the partnership of the Blackhawks are a combination that will help to change that dynamic so that more support, tolerance and progress for people with epilepsy becomes the norm.”



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As part of its mission to prevent deaths caused by seizures, the DDF has helped families across 48 states and 8 countries to gain access to seizure monitoring devices that compliment other treatments for epilepsy. These devices enable early intervention when seizure activity occurs, so that a parent or caretaker can conduct a well-being check on the person who is seizing.

For more information:

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About Danny Did Foundation

Founded by Chicagoans Mike and Mariann Stanton in 2010 after the sudden death of their four-year-old son Danny, the Danny Did Foundation's primary mission is to prevent deaths caused by seizures. The Foundation is dedicated to advancing public awareness of epilepsy and Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP), enhancing the SUDEP communication model between medical professionals and families impacted by seizures, and gaining mainstream acceptance and use of seizure detection and prediction devices that may assist in preventing seizure-related deaths. Epilepsy affects nearly 3 million people in the United States and 65 million people worldwide. **One in 26 Americans** will develop epilepsy during their lifetime. Seizures can be fatal—more people die as a result of seizures than from fires and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) combined—and thousands of deaths occur annually from SUDEP, status epilepticus (prolonged seizures), and other seizure-related causes such as drowning and other accidents. The name of the Danny Did Foundation originates from the last line of Danny Stanton's obituary, written by his dad: *"Please go and enjoy your life. Danny did."*