

EUROPEAN EPILEPSY DAY 2014

*Epilepsy
is more
than
seizures*

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HANNAH & EMMA BOUGHTON
IRELAND
Twin sisters who both have epilepsy

Twin sisters Hannah and Emma (7) are both mad about One Direction. Another thing the girls have in common is that they both have epilepsy (focal seizures); Emma was diagnosed at 2½ years and Hannah at 4 years.

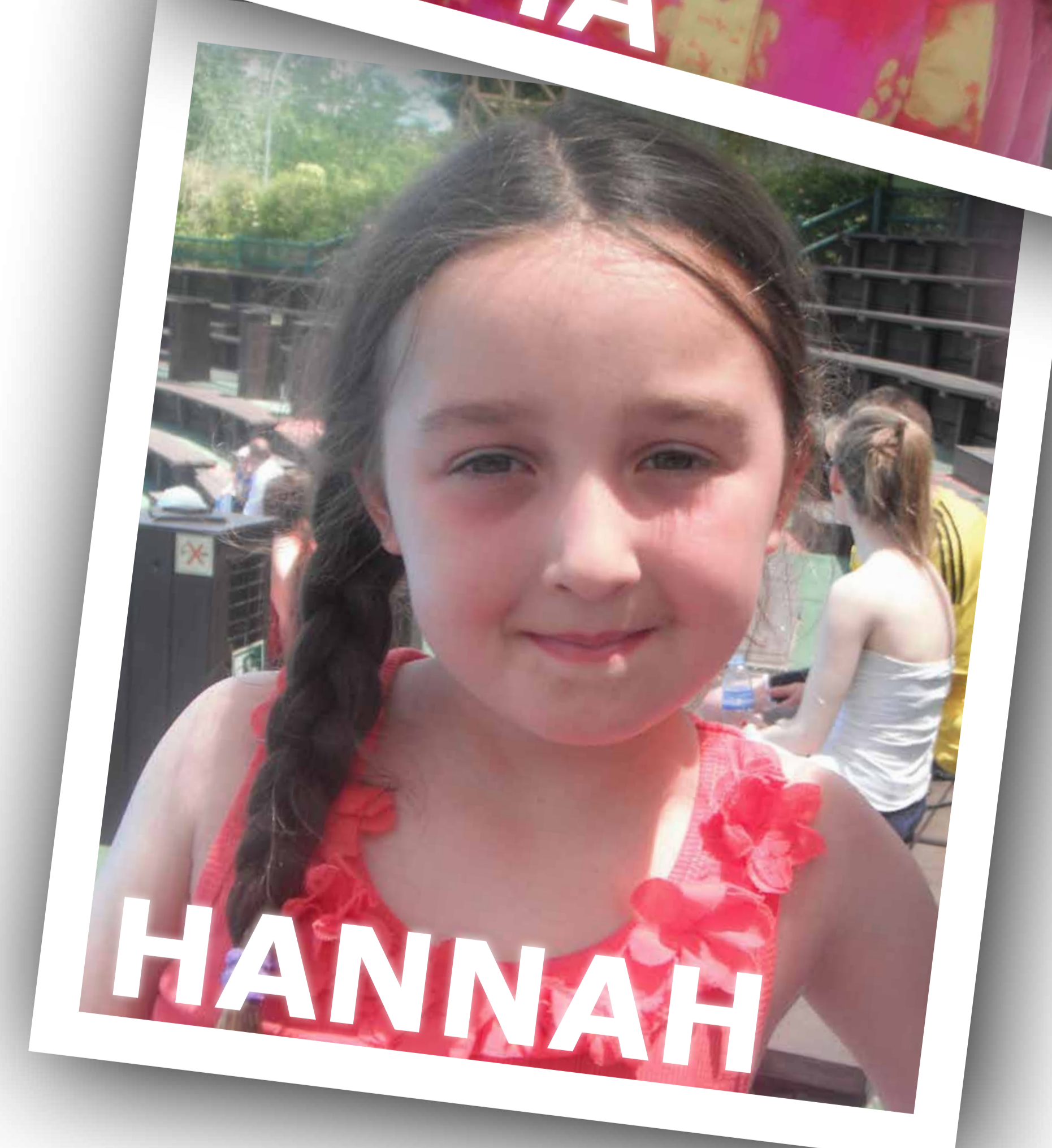
In 2010, Hannah was hospitalised for 6 weeks, with more than 20 seizures each day. She has been seizure-free for 3 years and is being weaned off one of her drugs. Emma was seizure-free for 2½ years, until last November when her seizures started again. She is now on a large cocktail of drugs. “We hope this medication change will bring Emma’s seizures under control”, explains her Mum, Tracy. “There definitely needs to be more money and support given to the development of new drugs and treatments for epilepsy”, she adds.

“We have never let the girls feel that they are different from any other kids. They are involved in GAA (Irish) sports, drama classes, hip-hop dancing and swimming lessons”, says Tracy. “They call their seizures ‘dizzies’ and feel that they are beating ‘the dizzies’ when they have no seizures”, she explains.

“It’s a constant worry when they are not with you and you never relax. We would love the girls to outgrow their epilepsy so that they don’t have to deal with it when they are teenagers or adults”, says Tracy.

There are fears for the future: will teenage hormones have an effect on seizures or cause a different type of epilepsy to develop; will they rebel against their medication regime; will the girls face stigma from strangers or at work?

But, for now, Hannah and Emma will continue as big fans of One Direction, hoping to find tickets for a future concert!



 European Advocates for
epilepsy

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European Epilepsy Day is organised by Epilepsy Advocacy Europe Task Force, European Advocates for Epilepsy MEP special interest group, and by national epilepsy associations across Europe