

## **Life With Ellie - All About Me**

Hi - my name is Ellie and I'm 24 years old. I live with my mum, dad and sister in Manchester. The things I like doing is: Seeing my friends, going out, going on holiday, doing hydrotherapy, going to work and posting videos on TikTok.

I was born with Cerebral Palsy but I don't let it get in my way of living my best life, instead I let it grow with me. By doing this, I like to tell my story about having Cerebral Palsy and the things it has let me achieve, like speaking in-front of thousands of people in the community, going to residential college in Coventry and achieving my gold Duke of Edinburgh award. I also go on holiday quite often, especially to America because I have family over there. I will be blogging about my holidays in the future, so keep an eye on it.

In 2004 I had a hip reconstruction, as my hip came out of the socket and then I had a spinal rod infusion in 2008 because I had bad Scoliosis. When I had my spinal rods done, it got infected and due to it I ended up in hospital for 10 weeks, I was really ill and didn't eat. When I did finally come out of hospital, I was scared about going into big open spaces and even going outside. I'm ok with it now, but if I do go out I like someone to come with me. I think I got scared of open spaces because I was in an enclosed space for 10 weeks. My best memory is when I did come out of hospital, everyone on my street through a party for me and some of the nurses came to the party. At the party, my family and friends got me in the middle and started to dance around me to Never Forget by Take That.

I now work at a non-profit organisation called Happy Smiles Blog CIC. Happy Smiles was set up by my friend called Alex, who cares for my other friend called Haydn. In 2017, Haydn was in hospital for nearly a year and he was always on his iPad, so Alex got the public on Facebook to send pictures of their best happy smiles to cheer Haydn up (hundreds of people sent in pictures). A few months after Haydn came out of hospital, Alex did a video with Haydn talking about how Haydn lives, communicates and what he likes doing. The video reached thousands of people. Because of this, Alex did more videos with people with disabilities that he knew, including myself. We had a really great reaction to the videos, so me and my other friend called Kurt joined Alex and Haydn to create the Happy Smiles team. We've since delivered training sessions and workshops to over 1500 people, with 100% of our audience recommending our training and we have been nominated for two national awards.

Website: [www.happysmilesblog.co.uk](http://www.happysmilesblog.co.uk)

Social Media handle: @happysmilesblog