

'It's amazing he has done this for Luca': Gareth Bale becomes the latest celebrity to help raise money for a four-year-old boy who lost his legs to meningitis

- Luca Williams lost his legs to meningitis when he was three
- His parents launched the 'Raise Your Hands For Luca' campaign
- Aims to raise £1.5m for prosthetic legs by getting people to write 'For Luca' on their palms and then to post a picture of their hand on Facebook
- Gareth Bale has joined other celebrities, including Olly Murs, Holly Valance, Sebastian Vettel and Stuart Broad, in doing so

4 September 2013

daily mail

The world's most expensive football player, Gareth Bale, is calling for people to help a little boy who lost both his legs to meningitis. Bale, 24, who was just sold to Real Madrid for £86 million, is the latest celebrity to join the campaign to raise money for Luca Williams, four. The footballer joined a host of other celebrities by writing 'For Luca' on his palm - then posted a picture of it onto a Facebook page set up for the child.



Gareth Bale, the world's most expensive footballer, has joined the 'For Luca' campaign to help raise £1.5 million to buy prosthetic legs for Luca Williams who lost his legs to meningitis

Luca's parents, Mo Syed and Sian Williams, are asking people to get involved in the 'Raise Your Hands for Luca' campaign to help raise £1.5 million to pay for prosthetic legs. The couple said they were thrilled that Bale had signed up to help their son. Ms Williams, 33, said: 'It's amazing that Gareth has done this for Luca at the same time he has become the most valuable footballer ever. 'He has given our campaign a huge boost and just goes to show what a lovely lad Gareth is.' Gareth Bale is not the first football star to join the 'For Luca' campaign - Maradona wrote the slogan on his hand and posted the picture onto the website as well. Formula One driver Sebastian Vettel, England cricketer Stuart Broad, British Lions captain Sam Warburton, film star Mickey Rourke, pop stars Olly Murs and Pixie Lott and Jamie and Louise Redknapp have also signed up.



Luca developed meningitis when he was three. He spent two weeks in intensive care and had to have surgery to amputate both of his legs



Luca displayed no signs of being ill when his parents put him to bed, but when they later checked on him, he was covered in a red rash so they rushed him to hospital where he was diagnosed with meningitis

One supporter even risked his job last year as he tried to get a picture of president Barack Obama while he held his hand up scrawled with the words 'For Luca'. Dai Baker, 39, an award-winning cameraman, who works for Channel 4 News, was told about the initiative by his brother, who is a friend of Luca's parents. Mr Baker was invited to the Oval Office to have his photo taken with the president after winning a number of prizes for his images.



Celebrities, including Micky Mouse (pictured), Holly Valance, Olly Murs and Stuart Broad, have joined the campaign to help Luca. So far, it has raised £225,000

The 'For Luca' campaign was launched last year and has attracted attention from around the world. Image shows England cricketer, Stuart Broad, with 'For Luca' written on his hand



While he was there, he took the quick picture in support of Luca. The campaign has so far raised nearly £225,000. Luca almost died from meningococcal septicaemia when he was three, and after two weeks in intensive care surgeons had to amputate both his legs. He showed no sign of being unwell when his parents put him to bed one evening but, when they checked on him during the night, they found he had developed a rash and his entire body had turned purple.



Mr Syed, Luca's father, said: 'Luca is an inspiration to us every day. The courage he has shown has kept us positive and made us proud.'
Image shows English singer-songwriter Olly Murs supporting the campaign

Luca's father, Mr Syed said: 'We only hope he can maintain this positive attitude as he copes with the awful effects of this terrible disease.'
Image shows actress and singer Holly Valance with 'For Luca' on her palm



They rushed him to hospital where doctors diagnosed him with meningococcal septicaemia, and he was given a number of treatments to replace lost fluids and blood. The youngster slowly started to show signs of improvement, but the disease had ravaged his body, leaving him black from his hips to his toes. Doctors took the decision to operate to remove his lower legs taking away all of the tissue and skin below his hips. His parents, from Newport, South Wales, are now trying to raise £1.5million to buy Luca prosthetic legs for the rest of his life and to pay for the care he needs.



Luca nearly died when he developed meningitis. His legs turned black from his hips to his toes



Luca (pictured left recently, and right, in hospital) will need new prosthetic legs as he grows

They launched the 'For Luca' campaign last year and more than 1,000 people have joined up by writing 'For Luca' on their palms. Mr Syed said: 'Luca is an inspiration to us every day. The courage he has shown has kept us positive and made us proud. 'We only hope he can maintain this positive attitude as he copes with the awful effects of this terrible disease.'

Gareth Bale joins campaign for little boy who lose his legs to meningitis

5 Sep 2013

mirror.co.uk

The Real Madrid player wrote "For Luca" on his palm and posted a snap on a Facebook page set up for little Luca Williams



Gareth Bale For Luca picture Backing: Gareth Bale with For Luca on his palm

Gareth Bale yesterday urged fans to help a boy of four who lost his legs to meningitis. The £85million Real Madrid player wrote "For Luca" on his palm and posted a snap on a Facebook page set up for little Luca Williams. Parents Mo and Sian are trying to raise £1.5million to buy Luca prosthetic legs and care for the rest of his life. And they were thrilled by the gesture of the world's most expensive footballer. Teacher Sian, 33, said: "He's given our campaign a huge boost and just goes to show what a lovely lad he is." Mo, of Newport, said: "Luca is an inspiration every day." Bale, 24, posted his message while back in Cardiff training with the Welsh team. Other stars to sign up are Diego Maradona, driver Sebastian Vettel, cricketer Stuart Broad and rugby's Sam Warburton.