

Oyster Festival latest fundraiser for SAM

THE Ballymena-born mother of a toddler with Muscular Dystrophy is delighted that the charity she helped to set up to find a cure for the condition - pleasefixSAM - is to benefit from one of the province's premier festivals in a few days' time.

Taking place from September 3-5, the Hillsborough Oyster Festival will once again be held in the historic Georgian village in County Down, with proceeds going to the charity inspired by her son, little Sam McCausland.

In addition to the World Oyster Eating Championships this year, festival goers will also be able to enjoy a fashion show, family fun day, live entertainment and competitions over the festival's three day run.

Proceeds will go to the SAM appeal set up to 'improve the



Sam McCausland, the inspiration behind the pleasefixsam campaign to find a cure for muscular dystrophy.

treatment, quality of life and long term outlook for persons affected by Muscular Dystrophy through awareness, research, education and advocacy'.

The appeal was inspired by Sam, who is now almost three years old, and one of two sons born to William and Tracy McCausland.

Tracy, nee Letters, was born and educated in Ballymena where her parents, Sam and Patricia Letters still reside.

Tracy's hope is that the pleasefixsam campaign increases public awareness of Muscular Dystrophy through media, educational and fund-raising campaigns as well as directing the money it raises to key research projects and drug trials which will further scientific understanding of Muscular Dystrophy, with a view to bringing potential life enhancing drugs to the latest generation of Muscular Dystrophy sufferers.

S.A.M. (Struggle Against Muscular Dystrophy) is unique in that its members have established

it as a zero cost charity - no overheads, no salaries, no administration fees.

In fact, everyone involved with the charity gives their time, expertise, products and services for free.

"All of the money we raise will help fund research into Muscular Dystrophy," says Tracy.

"SAM have created a strategic alliance with international advocacy group CureCMD in order to drive forward our efforts," she says.

"We are now delighted to say that we hope to work closely with them to help synergise fundraising efforts, provide support to the CMD community, attract scientists to the area of CMD research and improve the standards of care for CMD families.

"Our ultimate goals are the same - to find effective treatments and eventually a cure for Congenital Muscular Dystrophy".