All children are special, however, Variety – the Children’s Charity purpose is to serve children who are less fortunate - children who live and grow up with a serious illness, disability or disadvantage. These are extra special children who require a special kind of help.

That help is you and Variety - the Children’s Charity.

Under four core programs Variety - the Children’s Charity delivers on its promise to provide a future without limits for every child, regardless of their background or ability, and to be the most trusted and effective children’s charity in the world.
Variety's Care Program

delivers critical *life-saving* medical equipment and services, healthcare and well-being to individual children and children's health organizations.

Variety's Freedom Program

delivers vital *life-changing* equipment and services for mobility, independence and social inclusion to individual children and children's organizations.

Variety's Future Program

delivers crucial *life-enriching* communication equipment and services, education and self-esteem to individual children and children's organizations.

Variety's International Children's Fund

delivers imperative *humanitarian missions* for children in developing countries.
Unlike most charitable organizations that focus on a single area problem or issue, Variety focuses on multiple unmet needs of children who are sick, disadvantaged or live with disabilities and other special needs at a local, national and international level. Our aim is to maximize the real, long-term positive social impact for all children. Variety welcomes the support of any person who shares our ideals and objectives. The profound and long-term life changing benefits your donation and support delivers to a child cannot be overstated.

Although Variety’s work is serious, we never forget the importance of having fun. Bringing smiles to the faces of children is a positive and fun experience for Variety volunteers, sponsors and supporters.
Our Vision: To be the most trusted and effective children’s charity in the world delivering every child equality and a future without limits.

Our Mission: To fund and deliver effective programs that address the needs of all children locally, nationally and internationally.
Our Promise:

Variety is not the cause, children are the cause. Variety is the solution. Through best practices and professional stewardship, our solutions result in a lifelong positive impact on children, their families and the community.
Why is Variety Work Important?

1. The World Health Organization estimates that there are 93 million children aged 0 to 14 living with a moderate to severe disability worldwide.

2. Of the 93 million, 13 million live with severe difficulties.

3. Children with disabilities often have poorer health outcomes, lower education achievements and higher levels of poverty.

4. The functioning of a child should not be seen in isolation but in the context of the family and community. The economic and social costs borne by the family and society are high.

5. According to the World Health Organization, the unmet need for vital children’s assistive and medical devices, educational opportunities and social inclusion is extremely high.
To raise a child with a serious illness or disability costs a family four to five times the cost of a child not living with one or more of these conditions. Through Variety, your donation can forever change the life of a child and their family by helping fund key equipment and services to lessen the financial burden and provide every child with equality and a limitless future.

Large or small, EVERY DONATION combines to deliver a better future and life to a child in need.
Forever changing the life of a child living with a serious illness or disability is Variety - the Children's Charity core purpose. Trinity and her family embody the positive impact Variety’s donors and supporters deliver by providing opportunities to discover their full potential.

Through Variety, Trinity has experienced many life changing moments, from attending various outings and parties that promote social inclusion and interaction to being granted her own adaptive bike and communication device.

After receiving Trinity’s adaptive bike, her mother Kelley said “This really is a dream come true. As a parent, when you are told that your child will never walk or talk it is quite devastating, so this bike and freedom and family interaction it allows Trinity is simply wonderful.

Nowadays whenever my daughter is riding her bike, my son Tyson is right there with her. Tyson’s compassion for Trinity has always been huge but this helps and is making him a better person. A lot of people look at a child with special needs and don’t know what to say but Trinity has fans all over neighbourhood now because of her adaptive bike.”

Further, prior to receiving the grant of a communications device, an iPad with special applications, Kelley put into perspective how life enhancing this piece of equipment would be to her and the entire family. “Trinity’s teacher said she was telling stories at school through the communications iPad there. I had never heard my daughter tell a story and would love to hear her tell me one.”

The grant of the iPad and applications has made a world of difference to both Trinity and her family, not only in telling stories but in day to day communication.
Variety has its roots in the entertainment industry, but its heart is the community. People from all walks of life can contribute and experience the joy of helping a child, confident that their generosity has real impact and results in markedly improving a child’s future and making the world a better place.

Initially founded in 1927 by a group of 11 theatre owners and showmen in Pittsburgh, USA, as a social club, the so-named Variety Club evolved into a charity during 1928.

Playing cards backstage after a matinee performance at the Sheridan Square Theatre, the group heard whimpering from the auditorium. When they investigated, they discovered a one-month-old baby girl to whom her mother had pinned a desperate note:

"Please take care of my baby. Her name is Catherine. I can no longer take care of her. I have eight others. My husband is out of work. She was born on Thanksgiving Day. I have always heard of the goodness of show business people and pray to God that you will look after her.

Signed,
A heart broken mother"
When all efforts by the police and local newspapers failed to locate the parents, the club members decided that they would act as 11 “Godfathers” and underwrite Catherine’s support and education.

The little girl, who became the inspiration for our international children’s charity, was named Catherine Variety Sheridan, her middle name for the club and last name for the theatre she was found in. Proud that a distraught mother had entrusted her precious child to them, the club members set out to raise money and obtain goods needed for Catherine’s care. The resulting publicity put Catherine’s story and Variety on the front pages of newspapers across the United States. Inspired by Catherine’s story, many other people wanted to get involved and the members were soon inundated with help, far too much for one child, and thus other disadvantaged and orphaned children became beneficiaries of Catherine’s “adoption” by the Variety Club members.

**From the inspiration and motivation of a single child, one of the world’s greatest children’s charities developed globally**
Variety – the Children’s Charity has helped 10 year old Erin reclaim her confidence and self-esteem, by providing a specialised wig for the young girl, who lives with alopecia.

Alopecia is an autoimmune disease that affects hair growth on the scalp and entire body which results in minor or complete hair loss with slim chances of regrowth, for which there is no cure. For children especially, it is easy to imagine the detrimental psychological effects losing hair can have on self-esteem and confidence.

When Erin was just five years old, her mother, Maria noticed her daughter losing patches of hair. What followed was the eventual devastating diagnosis of alopecia and within just six months Erin was completely bald.

“Her hair began falling out in small clumps and initially the patches were no bigger than a five cent coin, but within months it worsened and we were told she had alopecia,” said Maria.

“She just wanted to feel ‘normal’ again and the wig from Variety certainly made all the difference. Her confidence sky-rocketed,” said Maria. Erin was able to indulge in activities typical of girls her age with no apprehension, including swimming and playing on the school’s playground equipment. “She loved the monkey-bars and dangling down from them, with her feet supporting her. The special suction mechanism of the wig ensured it stayed in place and all the other kids were non-the wiser,” said Maria.

Now, Erin, who is aged 10 is still enjoying all the benefits of the wig, which includes being able to style it in different ways. “She feels like a real movie star with the wig. That self-conscious little girl has disappeared and she has blossomed into a confident young lady,” adds Maria.

Maria and Erin are incredibly grateful to Variety for their generosity. “Self-esteem is really important for a young girl and the wig really was instrumental in helping Erin return to her old happy self!” said Maria.
Today, Variety – the Children’s Charity has a network of 44 offices in 13 countries, and many millions of individual children around the world, like Catherine, live a better life because of the generosity of Variety’s donors, sponsors and supporters.

When Catherine turned 5, foster parents were selected from more than 300 applicants. Catherine’s name was changed by her new parents, Gladys and Norman Riker, to Joan Riker and she grew up away from Pittsburgh to preserve her anonymity. Maturing into a fine young woman, Joan married in 1957 and raised her own family, sons Michael and twins Richard and Robert and a daughter, Lisa. Graduating as a nurse from Cornell University in 1951, Catherine/Joan spent a good part of her time proudly working with children.

Catherine/Joan passed away on September 9, 1994 at age 65, but her inspiration and motivation to help children in need burns brightly today through Variety – the Children’s Charity.

John Harris, who owned the Sheridan Square Theatre, went on to become the first president of Variety – the Children’s Charity International.
Unlike most charitable organizations that focus on a single disease or area of need, Variety focuses on multiple unmet needs of children who are sick, disadvantaged or live with disabilities and other special needs at a local, national and international level. Our aim is to maximize the real, long-term positive social impact for all children. Variety welcomes the support of any person who shares our ideals and objectives.

Through Variety,

“be the change you wish to see in the world”

Mahatma Gandi
Aidan Barry is an inspiration.

He represents all that is good about overcoming adversity and accepting the challenges of life.

Aidan, now 17, was born with Phocomelia Major. He lives with the loss of the upper limbs (effectively he has hands joined at his shoulders), visual impairment, major cardiac problems, bowel and lung issues, light and noise sensitivity and increased fatigue levels. Aiden has had a pacemaker since just before his third birthday.

He uses his feet instead of hands for certain activities i.e. Playstation and uses voice activated programs on his computer and iPod, both at home and at school.

Aidan has done public speaking and television appearances for the South Australian Amputee Golf Association, No Handicaps Golf Club (which he founded) and Variety - the Children’s Charity. His sporting prowess belies his condition as he is a proficient table tennis player, plays seven a side inclusive soccer and kayaks. As junior Captain of the SA Amputee Golf Association, its golf that seems his real sporting passion.

Even though golf is challenging at the best of times, Aidan says “there’s still lots to learn about golf. It’s one of those sports that you never say you’ve perfected because you never have”.

Variety has assisted Aidan in many ways around the development of his golfing enthusiasm as he is dedicated to practise, playing and continuous improvement whilst encouraging others. He is a much admired member of the Variety Scholarship program and regularly represents Variety as a ‘senior’ member of our alumni.

Variety – the Children’s Charity has supported Aidan and his family since he was five, with the provision of IT equipment, modifications to their home and a foot-controlled vehicle, as Aidan’s mother has the same condition.

Intellectually, Aidan is also a star as his school has selected him to do specialist maths amongst his other studies.

He enjoys doing research projects, is task focussed, very determined and a really positive individual who not surprisingly likes to find solutions to problems.

Aidan has never let his disability and medical problems stop him from achieving and his generosity of spirit shines through as he aspires to help others to find a solution to their challenges.

In 2014, Aidan showed his unique golf talents to elite Australian Football League athletes who were in awe of his determination and skill. Many lined up to meet Aidan and listen to the quietly spoken young man talk about his love of sport and shared his observations of football.

Aidan created such an impression he has been invited to play a round of golf with three of the AFL stars.

Aidan considers it important for everyone to reach their full potential and he lives his own creed daily.
Variety Care Program

More than 24,000 Children & 208 Organizations Helped
$8,041,851
FUNDS SPENT USD

NORTH AMERICA: $6,038,610
EUROPE: $279,509
MIDDLE EAST: $927,602
ASIA PACIFIC: $796,133
Variety Freedom Program

More than 5,500 Children and 253 Organizations Helped

NORTH AMERICA
4,429 Children
46 Organizations

EUROPE
128 Children
138 Organizations

MIDDLE EAST
100 Children
14 Organizations

ASIA PACIFIC
758 Children
55 Organizations
$13,447,551
FUNDS SPENT USD

NORTH AMERICA: $4,103,384
EUROPE: $4,341,594
MIDDLE EAST: $76,132
ASIA PACIFIC: $4,926,441
Variety Future Program

More than 75,000 Children and 527 Organizations Helped
$11,848,195
FUNDS SPENT USD

NORTH AMERICA
$7,767,874

EUROPE
$248,203

MIDDLE EAST
$856,667

ASIA PACIFIC
$2,975,451
Variety International Children's Fund

UKRAINE
350 Children

HAITI
175 Children

INDIA
50 Children

More than 575 Children Helped
$222,104
Funds spent USD

- Ukraine: $177,104
- India: $10,000
- Haiti: $35,000