

## A Brother's fundraising Challenge



“My three brothers all have varying degrees of autism. They have the same genetic condition called fragile X syndrome. Fragile X syndrome is a genetic condition involving changes in part of the X chromosome. It is caused by a change in the FMR1 gene. A small section of the gene code is repeated on a fragile area of the X chromosome. The more repeats, the more likely there is to be a problem. Normally, the FMR1 gene makes a protein needed for your brain to grow properly. A defect in this gene makes your body produce too little of the protein, or none at all. Boys and girls can both be affected, but because boys have only one X chromosome, a

single fragile X is likely to affect them more severely. You can have Fragile X syndrome even if your parents do not have it. Fragile X syndrome can be a cause of autism or related disorders, although not all children with fragile X syndrome have these conditions. Both my younger brothers (Jared and Jack) have severe forms of fragile X where as my older brother (Daniel) only has a mild form. Despite the variance in severity, they all have strong effects on everyday life. Above is a photo of me with me brother Jared.

My best friend Milly is helping me raise funds for Autistica - a charity that is making huge developments in autism research. It is supporting ground-breaking Fragile X research at Edinburgh University. We are taking part in a Charity Leggit - basically we have to get as far as we can from our uni (AUCB) in 36 hours and we have decided to embark on this epic quest and in doing so we hope to raise a whole heap of cash for our chosen charity. Here is the Challenge page -

<http://www.chooseachallenge.com/hitch/aucb-leggit/teams/the-metal-mulisha1>

We set this group up so that you can check up on our progress. The catch is that we're not allowed to spend a single penny. We need any help we can get. Obviously we don't expect tickets bought for us to New Zealand, but if you know someone that may be able to help get us a fraction of the way, your help will be more than appreciated. Our main goal for this challenge is not necessarily to win overall, but to help raise awareness for this awesome charity.

But we also want to raise funds through sponsorship. Please help us by donating on our justgiving pages. Milly's page is: <http://www.justgiving.com/millymcculloch> and mine is <http://www.justgiving.com/elliottwithers>

If you would like any more information on either the charity or Fragile X syndrome, or if you'd just like to know more about my amazing family and my awesome brothers, please get in touch or go to the charity websites [www.autistica.org.uk](http://www.autistica.org.uk) or [www.nfxf.org](http://www.nfxf.org).

Thanks for reading this and hopefully your support!”