



Intermediate Unit 1

Overview of “My Bike”, “My Stroller”, & “My Voice” Programs:

What is Variety – the Children’s Charity?

- Variety – the Children’s Charity provides children with disabilities unique programs, experiences, and equipment, so they may live life to the fullest and not be left out, left behind, or excluded.

What programs are offered through Variety?

- **Variety’s “My Bike” Program** currently provides eligible children with disabilities with a Rifton adaptive bicycle (with Rifton accessories) that is individually customized, so they may have the freedom of a bike and the joy of riding alongside friends and family.
- **Variety’s “My Stroller” Program** currently provides a Kid Kart® Mighty Lite adaptive stroller to eligible kids with disabilities for mobility and/or safety in the community. Typically, a family must choose between having a wheelchair or adaptive stroller. So, as a wheelchair is more necessary, an adaptive stroller allows for easier “on-the-go” mobility and participation in daily activities and throughout the community. With an adaptive stroller, kids are no longer isolated and it has an immediate impact on their lives. For others, a child might need an adaptive stroller to stay safe and secure while out in the community (rather than for just for mobility use).
- **Variety’s “My Voice” Program** provides a communication device (currently an iPad with a prescribed communication app) to eligible children with a communication disorder to give them a voice at all times – enabling kids to express their thoughts, feelings, wants, and needs.

When did it begin?

- Variety’s **“My Bike”** Program kicked off in Western Pennsylvania on November 5, 2012, and the success of **“My Bike”** led to the creation of **“My Stroller”** and **“My Voice”** on November 14, 2014. More than 2,500 adaptive bikes, adaptive strollers, and communication devices have been sponsored for kids since November 5, 2012 (that’s more than \$4 million worth of equipment).

Who is eligible for Variety’s programs?

- Variety’s adaptive equipment programs serve children and youth who have a documented mental, physical, or sensory disability; reside in Variety’s 54-county service area; are 4 through 21 years of age; meet the income guidelines; as well as the other eligibility requirements outlined in the application.
- **Income Guidelines:** An applicant’s household income must meet the program’s income guidelines that include: 2 household members (below \$82,300); 3 household members (below \$103,900); 4 household members (below \$125,500); 5 household members (below \$147,100); 6 household members (below \$168,700); 7 household members (below \$190,300); 8 household members (below \$211,900). *As information, families who have a child with disabilities typically experience greater expenses due to medical costs, therapy appointments, adaptive equipment, medications, and a variety of other needs or circumstances.*
- **Service Area:** Variety serves **42 counties in Pennsylvania:** Adams, Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Blair, Butler, Cambria, Cameron, Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Crawford, Cumberland, Dauphin, Elk, Erie, Fayette, Forest, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Juniata, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Mifflin, Northumberland, Perry, Potter, Snyder, Somerset, Union, Venango, Warren, Washington, and Westmoreland, and York; and **12 counties in West Virginia:** Barbour, Brooke, Doddridge, Hancock, Harrison, Marion, Marshall, Monongalia, Ohio, Preston, Taylor, and Wetzel.

How does someone apply to Variety programs?

- An application can be completed online or downloaded through Variety’s website at www.varietypittsburgh.org/applynow, or one can be mailed to you directly by calling the Variety office at 724-933-0460. Please note that eligible children can apply to more than one program if it is beneficial to their needs.

How much does it cost to sponsor equipment & how can someone donate?

- The cost to sponsor one adaptive bike is \$1,800, one adaptive stroller is \$1,500, and one communication device is \$1,200. **Donations for Variety’s programs can also be designated to a specific county to impact children in your own community.** Donations can be given online, or through U.S. Mail with a check being made out to “Variety” (please note any program or county designation on your donation, if applicable).

VARIETY IS SEEKING TO IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES FOR ITS PROGRAMS.



"Aubrey has tried a typical bike and it is just really difficult for her, even with training wheels, but not with this bike. Aubrey really enjoys being outside, active and doing things other kids do. **She's able to ride this bike and it helps her to feel independent and increase her self-confidence.** We would go to Ohio Pyle as a family with her older sisters being able to ride their bikes. In the past, Aubrey has had to stay behind, but now she is included!"

-Angela, mother of Aubrey (above)



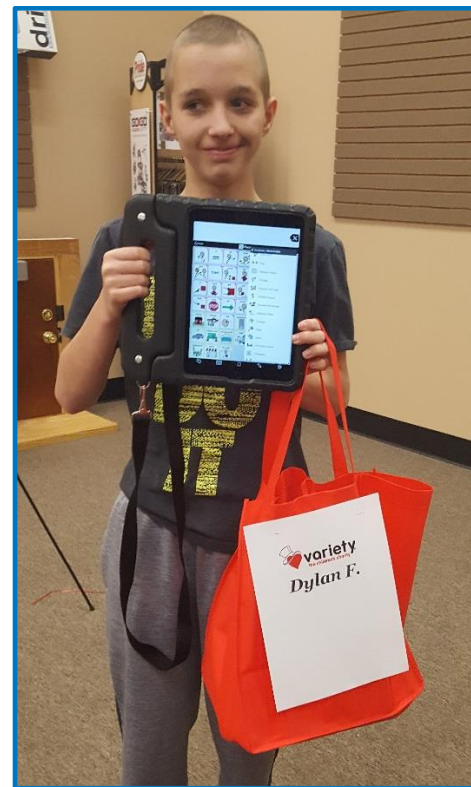
"Without an adaptive stroller, Noah and I are completely cut off from leaving our home. His old stroller that we purchased second hand (more than 10 years ago) is missing a leg rest, doesn't have harnesses, and is just unsafe due to him outgrowing it.

I'm a single mom, and taking him to all his doctor appointments is extremely difficult without a stroller.

Noah will now be able to go for walks in our neighborhood again with a safe mode of transportation!

We have literally opted out of attending family cookouts and events because we need a new stroller. Thank you and all those that support your organization from the bottom of our hearts!"

-Mara, mother of Noah (above)



"Thank you again for all that you're doing for the students here in our building. They are interacting with peers / staff, demonstrating progress towards academics, and their personality is shining! Specifically, Dylan, who just received his iPad, is our student of the month for using the device purposefully, showing responsibility, and peer tutoring another student with the same iPad / communication app."

-Sharon, speech language pathologist for Dylan (above)

