

Top designer joins bid to save sick tot

● Parents face terrible choice to save baby's hearing or damage her liver

A DESIGNER honoured by Royalty whose creations are worn by top celebrities is backing a bid to help fund life-saving treatment for a toddler battling a rare cancer.

Karl Donoghue, from Bromley, whose clothes have adorned the likes of Elizabeth Hurley, Kate Moss (pictured right) and Victoria Beckham, was touched by the plight of two-year-old Stella Rogers.

The tot suffers from Neuroblastoma, an aggressive cancer that has required her to endure punishing radiotherapy, chemotherapy and a stem cell operation.

She needs pioneering antibody treatment in the USA costing £250,000 before February 10 otherwise her hopes of survival are extremely slim.

Donoghue, a Harvey Nichols designer, laid on a champagne cocktail party over Christmas and guests who wanted a "Sparkling Star" cocktail, named after Stella, stuffed donations into a champagne bucket. He has pledged some items from his collection at future events to raise more money.

He said: "I have a young daughter myself. Stella is so young and so innocent, when I was told about her plight I felt it very touching."

"Because there was such a short time

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frame, we told friends at the party about her situation and named a cocktail after her.

"By spreading the word there is more possibility of touching someone's heart who can raise the funds that are so urgently needed."

The toddler's mum, Allison Hyde, a nurse and former Eltham Hill School student, said it was a "race against time".

Her daughter must receive the antibody treatment within 12 weeks of her stem cell operation, which took place in November last year, for it to work.

She said: "We are desperate to raise the money and public awareness of this condition."

"Stella has proven that she wants to fight and wants to live because she has been so ill through the treatment but bounced back each time. Many children don't make it this far."

The child was diagnosed with the condition after doctors found a one-litre large tumour in her tummy.

"Once she had a tumour taken away," said Mrs Hyde, "she got better initially and I had to watch her get ill again through chemotherapy."

"It's terribly distressing, but I knew that without the treatment she would die."

"My husband and I were given a choice of therapy for Stella, one would leave her deaf and the other would have liver side affects, and we had to make our mind up by 5pm that day."

Stella's parents decided to opt for treatment that would have an affect on her liver.

Mrs Hyde added: "You have to make terrible decisions, I can only hope she will forgive me for those decisions."

"I've been touched by the support we have had from people in all walks of life, mostly complete strangers."

A Valentine's Day concert is being put on by the University of



SURVIVOR:
Stella Rogers.



Greenwich Big Band in aid of the Stella Rogers appeal.

The 24-piece swing band will be playing all the best big-band hits, supported by Sinatra-style singer, Nigel Garrard.

The venue is David Fussey Lecture Theatre, in the University of Greenwich's Avery Hill Campus, in Eltham.

Tickets are free, donations made at the event, book by calling 020 8460 2116.

Karl Donoghue received the award for best womenswear designer in 2002 from Her Royal Highness, Princess Anne.

To donate and for information, visit www.forstella.org.

CHARITABLE:
Karl Donoghue, left, and above, Kate Moss is one of many models known to wear the designer's threads.

