

Celebrating rhinos

Celebrations are great. Friends and family coming together to show some love. But, they can be more than that. One particular supporter from South Africa used her birthday as an opportunity to help stop rhino poaching.

Isla D | Community Fundraiser, Rhino Warrior, 9 years old

Whether it's a wedding, birthday or baby shower, your big day can make a huge difference. Contact fundraising@savetherhino.org for advice.

I remember the first rhino calf I ever saw. It was so tiny, it still hadn't properly found its feet. Because I had spotted her, the ranger let me name her. I named her Riley Rhino.

Later that afternoon the ranger told me that many calves die because poachers kill their mothers for their horns. This made me cry a lot because earlier that year my mother was in a coma and in intensive care for several months. I wasn't able to see her much and did not know what would happen. I have never been more scared. It was the worst feeling in the world.

I couldn't imagine what happens to a helpless rhino calf if its mother gets poached and how lost they would feel. So, I decided there and then that I was going to help save rhinos the best way that I could.

Since my sixth birthday, I have asked my school friends to donate to Save the Rhino International instead of buying me presents. My mum uses a JustGiving online fundraising page to collect the donations. It's easy! My friends just click on a link and they can donate. This year I will be turning 10. To help me raise more than ever, my mum will be asking businesses to match or double whatever us kids donate.

In the future I want to be a wildlife vet because I love all wild animals. I often visit our national parks where I get to talk to rangers about poaching and the amazing work that they do to protect the wildlife. Recently, I have been giving speeches at schools to get other kids to think about what you want the future to look like and realise we can do something. We don't have to sit back and expect the adults to do this. If we ourselves don't start doing something we could lose not just rhinos, but other endangered species too.

My family call me the Rhino Warrior, I like that name. All I want to do is to educate others about poaching. I plan on being a Rhino Warrior for the rest of my life.

Isla and her family are true rhino heroes!

So far, Isla has raised an incredible RA 12,800 (£670)!



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