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Walking for their little miracle boy

KAYSEE MILLER

BORN at just 29 weeks, Carter Hay defied the survival odds and is now a thriving 22-month-old.

In gratitude, parents James and Brittany Hay, will walk this month to raise money for other premature babies and their families.

The Mawson Lakes couple hope the proceeds from Life's Little Treasures Foundation Walk for Prems will give other families support in the tough times following the birth of a premature baby.

"Some families gave us support and advice and it was the best thing for us," Mr Hay, 29, said. "So we're hoping that, with anyone else it happens to, we can give them some help."

Nearly 50,000 sick or premature babies are born in Australia each year. The Life's Little Treasures Foundation provides support and information to affected families.

Mrs Hay, 23, started having complications at 26 weeks.

"It was definitely traumatic, they (doctors) did the best they could," she said.

"I had contractions and went into labour every day for three weeks ... until I dilated

too quickly at 29 weeks and he was born within three hours."

Weighing only 1210g, Carter spent the first five weeks of his life in an incubator at the Women's and Children's Hospital. Mr and Mrs Hay believe they are lucky to now have their healthy and happy almost two-year-old.

"When her waters broke and we went into hospital, the doctors took us through to where the premature babies were ... to prepare us," Mr Hay said. "They told us the worst possible outcome and we were lucky to get the best possible outcome and have a healthy baby. But some families aren't so lucky."

Reaching their \$600 fundraising goal within the first 24 hours of signing up, Mr and Mrs Hay have now set their sights higher and are hoping to raise at least \$2000.

"We're hoping to be the highest fundraisers to try and make a big impact – the way it helped us," Mrs Hay said.

The Adelaide Walk for Prems is on Sunday, October 28 at Karrawirra (Park 12).

FOR INFORMATION, OR TO DONATE SEE LIFSLITTLETREASURES.FUNDRAISING.COM.AU/ CARTERHAY



HAPPY FAMILY: James and Brittany Hay, with their 22-month-old son Carter, who was born premature, inset..

Picture: ROY VANDERVEGT/AAP