

**kids
candidly**

YOUR GIFTS AT WORK, TRANSFORMING
THE LIVES OF CHILDREN WITH CANCER

**kids
cancer care**

SPRING 2021 ISSUE

kidscancercare.ab.ca



**THRIVING
AFTER CANCER**

CEO message



Unique Perspectives Photography

A message of hope

After a year of lockdowns and social isolation, we could all use a bit of hope and a hug. While the hug isn't possible, hope is possible and it is essential to our wellbeing. Hope offers us a glimpse into a better future and inspires us to keep going in times like this.

You are a vital source of hope for hundreds of families facing childhood cancer today. When conventional programming became impossible, you believed in us and, with your help, we found new ways to offer our programs. We will take these new technologies into the post-COVID world, combining traditional and new program models to reach more families across Alberta.

Some say hope is idle. I disagree. "Hope is not a passive exercise in wishing, but an active approach to life."* At Kids Cancer Care, the currency in which we deal is hope. And you make that possible.

Thank you for believing in us. And thank you for giving us hope for a better future for children with cancer.

With hope and gratitude,

Christine McIver, M.S.M., LLD (Hon), CFRE
Founder and Chief Executive Officer

*Polly Campbell, "Why Hope Matters," in *Psychology Today*.

PS. Our 2020 digital annual report is coming to you by email in June. If you prefer to receive a printed copy by mail, please contact us at staff@kidscancercare.ab.ca or 403 216 9210.

camp & outreach

growth inspired by you

You're helping Baylen rebuild his life

"Kids Cancer Care was a gigantic part of my healing and recovery," —Baylen

It started with migraines.

When the migraines became unbearable, Baylen and his parents went to emergency. Eventually, an MRI revealed a tumour the size of a ping pong ball in the center of his brain. Baylen was given a 20 per cent chance of survival.

What followed was a year of severe isolation and invasive cancer treatments—two brain surgeries, 31 radiation sessions, four months of high-dose chemotherapy, a stem cell rescue and countless medical procedures.

"Imagine COVID-19 on steroids. That was our life," says Baylen, who was 13 at the time.

Thanks to your generosity, we were able to help Baylen through this difficult time. With your support, Baylen gradually rebuilt his strength with therapeutic exercise through our PEER program. At PEER, Baylen realized it was safe to be a kid again.

Your support also meant that Baylen could experience the magic of Camp Kindle that summer. Bullied at other camps in the past, Baylen was reluctant to go, but he quickly discovered that this camp would be different: "Everyone was so nice. It made me feel like a normal kid. The camp



Unique Perspectives Photography

counsellors regularly pushed me outside of my comfort zone—always in encouraging and positive ways. They actually made me want to challenge myself and do things I didn't know I could."

Now 15, Baylen is getting help with school through our tutoring services and is active in our Teen Leadership Program (TLP). Through TLP, he is connecting online with other teens and working toward his Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award: "They are teaching me to be a better person and how to help more people than I ever did before," says Baylen. "I get to learn how to fundraise, volunteer and be a leader."

Thanks to your support, Baylen is thriving: "Before cancer, I was reserved and timid, but now look at me! Look at what I have been through and what I know I can do. Kids Cancer Care is helping to shape the person I am today."

With the right support, kids like Baylen can flourish and grow—even through adversity. Thank you for believing in kids whose lives have been interrupted by cancer. 🍀



Photos courtesy of Baylen's family

The back of Baylen's head after two surgeries



you

hope
powered by you

You're going the distance for kids with cancer

"What was nice about this event is you could participate from anywhere, at any time. We were on a family vacation in the Okanagan and it was completely doable because I could spread the kilometers out over the week and still have time with my family." —Troy



Nina's first of many Cycle Challenges

Photo courtesy of Rensché Venter

In Johannesburg, South Africa in the early '70s, a little girl named Walda was diagnosed with brain cancer. She was five years old and her life was forever changed. Now, 43 years later, in another city on another continent, 15,815 kilometers away, a little girl named Nina was going the distance for Walda and children like her in the Kids Cancer Care Cycle Challenge.

Over the course of a week in August last summer, 68 cyclists collectively rode more than 17,000 kilometers. With the help of generous sponsors such as Peloton Computer Enterprises they raised \$202,000.

The concept was simple. Choose your own adventure—your distance, your destination, your time. The COVID-adapted format meant that cyclists of all ages and fitness levels could participate at their own pace and in their own time.

While little Nina pedaled hard to put in 50 kilometers, hardcore cyclists like Troy Delfs of the Peloton Racing Club put in 500 kilometers over the week. And athletic titans like Jared Green put in 500 kilometers in a single day.

The Peloton Racing Club has long supported Kids Cancer Care through Tour for Kids Alberta—a three-day cycling event through the Canadian Rockies. Although he missed the camaraderie of Tour for Kids this year, Troy was able to get in a ride with two cycling buddies while on a family vacation last summer.

Nina's mother Rensché Venter also appreciated the flexible format: "It's really great to do something like this as a family," she says. "Nina was super excited about it. If the format is the same this year, we'll be back."

The cycle challenge also provided Rensché with a teaching moment for her daughter. When Nina was two, they travelled to South Africa to visit family. That was when Nina met her mother's cousin Walda, who was 42.

Although the distance between them in years and kilometers was vast, Nina and Walda bonded instantly. Burdened with significant physical and cognitive delays after cancer, developmentally, Walda was not much older than Nina is now. The two had a lot of fun together.

"I explained to Nina that we were riding for kids like Walda," says Rensché. "I told her, 'That's what happened to Walda. She had cancer as a child.'"

Cont. on page 4

"If the format is the same this year, we'll be back."

—Rensché



L to R: Walda, Rensché and Nina in Johannesburg

Photo courtesy of Rensché Venter

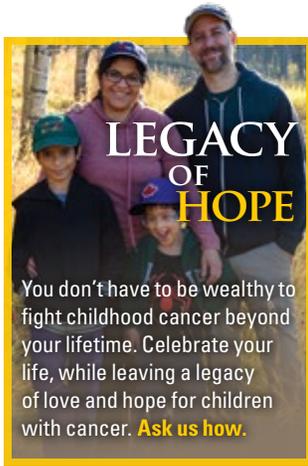


Troy challenged himself in the Okanagan

how to help

5 ways you can help us

rebuild young lives during COVID and beyond



BE A MONTHLY DONOR

For the price of a coffee, you can be a superhero in the life of a child with cancer. Your monthly gifts will add up over time and make a **lasting impact** in the lives of children with cancer.

MAKE A ONE-TIME GIFT

Your gift will help ensure we're here to **help kids in these uncertain times.**

FUNDRAISE ONLINE

Start an online fundraising event to help kids **living in fear of what COVID-19** could do to their fragile health.

BE BRAVE

Join our **online Big Brave event** and cut, colour or shave your lid for a kid, while raising funds for essential online and COVID-adapted programs.

CYCLE

Just you, your bike and the open road. Choose your distance, your destination and your speed. Raise funds for kids with cancer in the **2021 Kids Cancer Care Cycle Challenge.**

Donate, register or learn more at kidscancercare.ab.ca today.

you

Cont. from page 3

As senior manager of MNP's Enterprise Risk Services, Rensché has also provided risk management services at no cost to Kids Cancer Care.

"Kids Cancer Care will always have a special place in my heart because of Walda," says Rensché. "We were very close, so saw each other often and did a lot together. Walda had balance issues and was often falling. I remember her falling and smashing her head open. I understand the challenges of having a child affected by cancer and what groups like Kids Cancer Care can do for these kids and families."

Thank you for going the distance for children affected by cancer. Your support makes our programs possible.



Rensché enjoying a day of fun behind bars



Photo courtesy of Troy Delfis

Not all roads need to be paved and they don't even need to be roads at all to offer you a great time while raising funds for kids with cancer!



A new pedaling adventure for Nina

Photos of Nina & Rensché courtesy of Rensché Venter

kids cancer care

Kids Cancer Care Foundation of Alberta
5757 4 Street SE
Calgary, Alberta
T2H 1K8

kidscancercare.ab.ca



Kids Cancer Care Foundation of Alberta is a registered Canadian charity #89940 9171 RR0001.