

**kids
candidly**

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

**kids
cancer care**

SPRING 2018 ISSUE

kidscancercare.ab.ca



JOSHUA'S FREEDOM

Bullied at school and faced with daily challenges, Josh has found a safe place at PEER – thanks to you

CEO message



Unique Perspectives Photography

“Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, whispering, ‘it will be happier’ ...” Lord Alfred Tennyson

As I write today, I’m hesitant to even mention the current economic situation. It’s been a long, difficult journey and from all accounts it appears it is not over yet.

Here at Kids Cancer Care, we are feeling the sting of this new economic reality.

But I remain hopeful, because of you.

Despite challenging times, you have remained steadfast in your support for children with cancer. Your support makes new research and essential programs like PEER possible.

Thank you for standing by us. You give our families hope.

With gratitude,

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

**Please continue to help.
Our families need you now
more than ever.**

**Visit kidscancercare.ab.ca
or complete the enclosed
donation form to give today.**

research

powered by you

With your support, Calgary researchers are exploring ways to use the body’s own immune system to kill cancer.

“What we found is a combination of cancer therapies that complement each other to help the immune system clear the cancer.” – *Dr. Doug Mahoney*

Immunotherapy is a promising new field in cancer research that is looking for ways to harness the body’s own immune system to attack and kill cancer.

Cancer cells can survive because they know how to hide from the body’s immune system. They also know how to control immune cells. Some cancerous tumours can actually reprogram immune cells to block other immune cells from attacking, leaving the tumour free to grow.

Thanks to your support, a Calgary research team has made an important discovery in immunotherapy that is using existing drugs in a whole new way to combat cancer.

Dr. Doug Mahoney’s lab at the University of Calgary is one of three labs worldwide that is investigating a new immunotherapy combination that is showing promise for killing cancer. In the study, U of C researchers combined two therapies, each one targeting a different part of the immune system. One therapy helped boost the immune system, while the other helped stop the tumour from reprogramming immune cells.

“This combination of drugs allowed the immune cells to do what they’re supposed to do,” says Dr. Mahoney, a Kids Cancer Care-funded researcher at U of C’s Cumming School of Medicine. “We were able to cure cancer in 20 to 60 per cent of our cancer models.”

When the researchers added a third complementary immunotherapy, the cure rate went as high as 80 to 100 per cent.

“Our results suggest that we’ve been looking at these cancer drugs the wrong way – as tumour-targeting drugs – instead of what we now feel is their most important biological role: as immune stimulating therapy,” says Dr. Mahoney.



“We were able to cure cancer in 20 to 60 per cent of our cancer models.”

– *Dr. Doug Mahoney*

Clinical trials based on similar results are now in progress in two other centres. Dr. Mahoney says that research over the next five years will reveal the impact this study may have on treating cancer patients. ■

Community support and strategic partnerships make life-saving research possible. Dr. Mahoney’s lab, the Trican Childhood Cancer Therapeutics Lab, is supported by Trican Well Service, the Kids Cancer Care Foundation of Alberta, the Alberta Children’s Hospital Foundation and Believe in the Gold Foundation. This research study was supported by the Canadian Cancer Society, the Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy and the Cancer Research Society.

~ Adapted with permission from the University of Calgary’s Cumming School of Medicine.

lives rebuilt by you

You are giving Joshua the freedom to be.

"He knows he's not athletic, so he holds back. He's reluctant to try, but at PEER, he's free to be himself. He can just be a kid without being different."

— Michael, Joshua's father

When Joshua saw *The Greatest Showman* the tears streamed down his cheeks. "They're tears of joy mom," he explained as his mother moved to comfort him. "Maybe," his mother says, "he felt a connection with the outsiders in the movie because he feels different too."

Maybe the tears came because he was being bullied at school. A secret that only he and his tormentors knew.

Thank goodness Josh has you. With your support, he has found a safe place where he is free to be himself.

Josh walks with a limp and fatigues easily. The boys at school tease him because he can't keep up. They taunt him as they lap him in gym class, whispering that he's a baby and he's lazy.

None of this is Josh's fault, but he lives with the painful reality of it every day. It is the fallout of cancer treatments he received many years ago.

One day, last September, Josh was having an especially bad day. It was the first day of PEER (Pediatric Cancer Patients and Survivors Engaging in Exercise for Recovery) and Josh was refusing to go. With energetic coaxing from his parents, he reluctantly agreed to go and had the time of his life.

"After his first session, Josh came out of the gym with the biggest grin on his face," his mother Victoria says. "I wish we could have done PEER years ago. It's the best thing ever for Josh."

When asked if he wanted to go to PEER again, Josh answered with a resounding, "Yes! They're just like me there." ■

Cont. on page 4



Joshua during his treatment



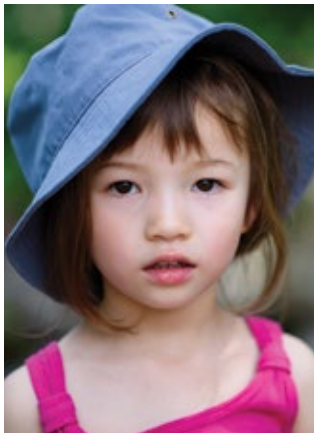
"They're just like me there."

— Joshua



how
to help

5 ways you can help



SHAVE

Show moral support for kids who lose their hair to chemo by **shaving your lid** and raising funds.

CELEBRATE

Celebrate with heart and soul by **asking for donations in lieu of gifts** on your birthday, graduation, wedding or other milestone event.

CYCLE

Ride somewhere meaningful **July 13 to 15 on Tour for Kids Alberta**, a premier all-inclusive three-day cycling adventure through the Canadian Rockies.

GEAR UP

Test your brains and brawn on **September 8** at our newest fundraising event, **Kindie Pursuit**. Put a team together for an unforgettable day of challenges, games, bonding and more at **Camp Kindie**.

DONATE

Join our **League of Superheroes Monthly Giving Program** and help fund the next wave of childhood cancer research.

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

power
of you

Your support helped us expand PEER and reach more kids

PEER helps children affected by cancer rebuild their fundamental movement skills (e.g., running, jumping, catching and throwing), while also building muscle strength, aerobic capacity, flexibility and balance.

With your support, last September, we were able to expand our PEER program with more weekly sessions. This enabled Josh to go for the first time.



"He's a different kid at PEER. He walks in like he owns the place. Even if he is sitting out in gym class, at least he has PEER every week."

— Michael, Josh's father

Josh is like many childhood cancer survivors who fall behind their peers in motor development because invasive medical procedures, treatment-related isolation and permanent side effects make regular activity difficult.

"I know Josh needs to be challenged," his father Michael says. "But his teachers need to recognize that he has limits and they're different from other kids his age. PEER is a safe place where Josh can be challenged and have fun."

Josh is still terrified of his tormentors and only recently told his parents about the teasing – after months of sitting alone at lunchtime and on the sidelines at recess.

His parents still don't know for sure the bullying has stopped, even though they've had a serious sit-down with his teachers. Next year, he's going to a different school.

Thanks to you, Josh has PEER to help him through this painful time.

"He's a different kid at PEER," his father says. "He walks in like he owns the place. Even if he is sitting out in gym class, at least he has PEER every week." ■



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