

**kids
candidly**

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

25
YEARS
+you | **kids
cancer care**

SUMMER 2019 ISSUE

kidscancercare.ab.ca



CANCER MAY HAVE STARTED THE FIGHT

but your support is helping
kids like Ryane to finish it.

CEO message



Unique Perspectives Photography

25 YEARS +you

**Summer is here!
And, thanks to you,
our summer camps
are in full swing.**

Camp offers a touch of magic and a hint of freedom for kids whose lives are disrupted by cancer. These kids literally start counting down the days for next year as soon as they return home from camp. This mother's note says it all:

My kids were so excited and HAPPY that Camp Kindle was finally here again. They have waited...oh, about 365 days for it!

The impact of your generosity is immeasurable. Ryane's story shows how these formative experiences, which begin at camp, shape and influence their lives forever. Our programs build strength and resilience in young people, who will always have to work harder, study longer and protect their health more vigilantly because of what cancer has done to them.

With your support, we have been helping young people rebuild their lives through our life-changing programs for 25 years! Thank you. You are making a difference.

With gratitude,

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

camp

lives strengthened by you

You are helping kids rebuild for the long journey ahead

"At camp, everyone knows what cancer is without having to explain a thing.... We all just get it. We've all been there. There is complete acceptance and you're just free to be yourself." — *Ryane.*

At the age of three, after weeks of unexplained weight loss, Ryane Nethery was diagnosed with cancer. The tumour in her kidney was the size of a watermelon and was pressing against her stomach. This may explain why she wasn't eating.

"By the time I was diagnosed, I had dropped down to 30 pounds," says Ryane. "Keep in mind that I weighed 26 pounds on my first birthday."

After nine rounds of radiation and 10 months of constant chemotherapy, Ryane finished treatment, but her cancer journey was far from over.

Because she was so young, the cancer treatments interfered with her development. Ryane was left with a life-threatening heart condition and a serious learning disability. As with many childhood cancer survivors, her processing speed is slower and she requires a lot of repetition to grasp concepts. Ryane stays after school every day for homework support. She also goes to summer school and, thanks to you, is getting extra help through our tutoring program.

With your support, Ryane is also building her inner reserves and outdoor leadership skills through our camp programs.

When Ryane was four, she attended her first Family Camp and met her best friend Maddie: "We said hello in the parking lot and were inseparable for the rest of the weekend. At nighttime,



L-R Maddie and Ryane first met at camp over a decade ago.

we talked through a little hole in the wall and kept our parents up all night long."

Thanks to your generosity, Ryane and Maddie have been going to camp together for the past 11 years. These lifelong friendships play a vital role in the healing and recovery of kids affected by cancer. They build emotional resilience and help children to understand their cancer experience in a new light — as something to be lived, rather than shunned.

This summer, Ryane and Maddie are enjoying their first SunSeeker camp — an outdoor adventure program that empowers teens to develop transferrable life skills such as communication, team building and outdoor survival, e.g., fire-starting. While the teens enjoy outdoor recreation such as hiking and canoeing, they must also master important life skills, e.g., cooking their own meals, pitching their own tents and setting up camp together.

Thank you for supporting our camp programs. Your generosity is giving kids like Ryane the skills and resilience they need to navigate the lifelong journey of childhood cancer. ■



L-R Ryane and Maddie friends forever.

Cancer may have started the fight, but you're helping Ryane to finish it.

"I am learning important life lessons. Helping kids with cancer helps me to make sense of my own cancer and it gives me hope for all of us. The motto I live by is 'Cancer may have started the fight, but I'm finishing it!'" — *Ryane.*



L-R Andrea and Ryane after a hard day's work.

Thanks to you, last spring, Ryane Nethery and 15 other teens from Kids Cancer Care's Teen Leadership Program had a life-changing experience in Guadalajara, Mexico.

While in Guadalajara, the teens volunteered at a shelter, a school and a hospital for children with cancer. Both the school and shelter are run by a local children's cancer charity called Nariz Roja — Red Nose.

For Ryane, visiting the hospital was the most impactful experience of the trip.

"It's so different from a children's hospital here in Canada," says Ryane, a first-year teen leader. "There's no privacy. You can see right into the back where they are mixing the chemo drugs. Once I saw this and heard kids crying, it really hit me."

Unlike Canadian hospitals, where privacy is absolute and chemotherapies are prepared in a lab offsite, the hospital in Guadalajara was overcrowded with on-treatment children, sitting and playing on the pavement outside, while waiting for their chemotherapy appointment.

The teens filled their days with volunteer work, whether it was mopping floors, making beds, painting walls, hauling bricks or playing with children at the hospital.

The teen leaders hauled hundreds of bricks to a construction site, where Nariz Roja was building a second shelter for children with cancer. This in turn created jobs and temporary housing for local homeless men, who were able to sleep in the gated construction site, while working on the project.

Despite language barriers, the teens managed to connect with students from the Nariz Roja School. With each group presenting on their own culture and traditions, the Calgary teens worked on their Spanish skills and the Mexican kids their English.

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Ryane, hauling bricks at the construction site for the new children's shelter.

"Once I saw this and heard kids crying, it really hit me."

— *Ryane.*

how to help

5 ways you can help



SHAVE

Be a part of Calgary's largest shave and colour event. Shave, cut or colour your hair, while raising funds for children with cancer at **THE BIG BRAVE**. You got this.

CELEBRATE

Bring meaning to your celebrations by asking for **donations in lieu of gifts** on your birthday, graduation, wedding or other milestone celebration.

GEAR UP

Register your team of four and take on **KINDLE PURSUIT** — Alberta's largest outdoor obstacle course. Continental breakfast, BBQ, beer garden and prizes for top teams. Join us **September 7** at Camp Kindle.

BRUNCH IT

The most important meal of the day. Join us for **THE BIG BREAKFAST** — a city-wide brunch experience with your buddies and besties at your favourite breakfast spots.

DONATE

Make a one-time gift or join our **League of Super Heroes** Monthly Giving Program.

To get involved today, visit kidscancercare.ab.ca


outreach

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In the little free time they had, the teens immersed themselves in Mexican culture and toured the city of Guadalajara, visiting a cathedral and learning salsa dancing.

"I am learning important life lessons, says Ryane. "Helping kids with cancer helps me to make sense of my own cancer and it gives me hope for all of us. The motto I live by is 'Cancer may have started the fight, but I'm finishing it!'"

With your support, Ryane is able to live by these words.

Thank you RBC, Telus and other generous donors for believing in our Teen Leadership Program. You are helping teens affected by cancer to build transferrable life skills such as teambuilding, leadership, communication, time management, budgeting and career planning. 

Ryane, a proud survivor of kidney cancer.



The teens, embracing Mexican culture.

kids cancer care

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

kidscancercare.ab.ca



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