

Annual Report 2022



**THE KIDS'
CANCER
PROJECT**

SURVIVAL STARTS WITH SCIENCE.



Message from
Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC
Governor of New South Wales

Approximately 950 young Australians are diagnosed with cancer every year and, tragically, three young people die from cancer each week making it the leading cause of childhood death by disease in our country. The devastating effect this has on families and entire communities cannot be understated.

As Vice-Regal Patron of The Kids' Cancer Project, I salute those who responding to these challenging facts with action and compassion: scientists and researchers, the clinicians at the coalface of care, volunteers, donors, corporate partners, team members, impacted families and friends. Thank you for the vital part you each play in energising the bold science that has the greatest chance of clinical success to improve childhood cancer treatments.

The good news is that the work of The Kid's Cancer Project to seed-fund targeted pioneering research projects is contributing to increasing survival rates and leading to the discovery of innovative treatments. Today, children diagnosed with cancer are much more likely to survive than they were only a few decades ago. And, by continuing to fund better treatments and outcomes for children, knowledge about treating adult cancers is also expanding. Developing approaches in adult treatment such as combination therapy, can be traced back to breakthroughs in paediatric research.

I commend the work of The Kids Cancer Project, and their community of supporters, for making a difference in the lives of so many young Australians through investing in the 'science, the solutions and the survival' of children with cancer.



Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC
Governor of New South Wales

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A message from our Founder

The Kids' Cancer Project's continued funding of pioneering Australian research is a testament to the loyal support of our donor and partner community.



As we worked through another year of a pandemic, raising awareness of the need to do even more to help kids with cancer was paramount, and so our supporter community responded increasing in number and commitment.

Whether learning about our work through social media, attending a fundraising event or dressing as a pirate for a day, it's clear there are many people doing all they can to raise funds for bold science. The funds raised support The Kids' Cancer Project which in turn funds multiple Australian research projects across all childhood cancers.

Since founding The Kids' Cancer Project in 1993 I am thrilled that survival rates have increased to over 86% for most childhood cancers and 90% for leukaemia. But there is still more to be achieved. For instance, while thanks to powerful research various forms of leukaemia have seen survival rates burgeoning, others such as acute myeloid leukaemia are harder to treat. Yet, thanks to continued funding that researchers are now gradually discovering the weak spots of those cancers.

And while childhood cancer is rare compared to adult cancer, the rare childhood cancers have a long way to go before all children will survive them. But it isn't just researchers making a difference. I have met many families of children with cancer who understand firsthand what their little ones have had to endure to be cured who are now determined to help make change. Watching an infant, child or teenager suffer is something that can never be forgotten.

Mark Pacey is one parent whose son, Cooper, at age seven, was diagnosed with a rare tumour in his kidney. Mark remembers in startling detail what Cooper went through before stem cell therapy ultimately saved him from the chemotherapy that nearly destroyed him. Determined to help improve treatments for kids, today Mark undertakes his own annual triathlon known as The Bloody Long Day. Thankfully Cooper is now a thriving young adult, but he still remembers how sick he felt during his cancer treatment. Not wanting other kids to suffer as Cooper did, The Pacey Family has raised over \$130,000 to support research into kinder and more effective treatments.

The Paceys are just one of the amazing families that have connected with and supported The Kids' Cancer Project. I am humbled by their constant grace, creativity, innovation and willingness to help other families who are going through the hardest time of their lives. This strong connection is what builds a community. It's only through such commitment that we hope to see a 100% survival rate of children with cancer – children who will one day grow into healthy adults and continue the culture of helping their own community.

Colin Reynolds

Col Reynolds OAM
FOUNDER

A message from our CEO

Thanks to our donors, supporters, partners and fundraisers, The Kids' Cancer Project had a six percent growth in our gross profit finishing the year in a strong financial position enabling our work in funding bold scientific research to continue.



Our commitment to innovative science increased from 32 to 40 research projects across 25 Institutions nationally.

Our ongoing funding of pioneering Australian research would not have been possible without our valued corporate partners, major donors, and our amazing community of fundraising champions. We are greatly appreciative of their continued commitment.

FY21-22 was the year of 'keeping up the momentum' for kids' cancer research and the entire team firmly embraced our vision of 100% survival of all children without the harmful effects of cancer treatment.

During Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in September, the charity launched the Better Challenge, challenging participants to walk, run, ride, or roll three kilometres a day for the three families that hear the words "Your child has cancer." The Better Challenge was a great success raising over \$1 million to support fourteen research studies, three brain cancer, five late effects and six sarcoma projects. The contribution from The Kids' Cancer Project's donor and partner community led to a total of \$3 million of multi-year funding invested in childhood cancer research.

We continue to innovate and create plans to ensure the sustainability of the charity. This included a transformation from our traditional telemarketing raffle program; achieving the milestone of over 10,000 regular givers who have committed over \$2 million for the first time; the development of the Better Challenge our first peer-to-peer national

fundraising campaign; and a commitment to ensuring our messages can cut through.

I would like to personally thank our dedicated staff at The Kids' Cancer Project for their ongoing commitment and recognise our Research Advisory Committee as well as our Board of Directors, who generously volunteer their time to ensure we accomplish our mission.

And once again thank you for your support. Like us, you believe that science is the solution – you have become part of our community of champions, and we are so grateful to have you on this journey.

Owen Finegan

Owen Finegan
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Advocating for all kids with cancer

The Kids' Cancer Project has been advocating for better outcomes for kids with cancer since being established in 1993.

Average childhood cancer survival rates have increased to over 85% today, but cancers such as brain, sarcoma and neuroblastoma offer little hope for long-term survival for children diagnosed. Kinder, more effective treatments are urgently needed to ensure kids will have a healthy survival – that's why continued advocacy is so important.

To raise awareness of the impact of rare cancers on children, their families and communities, The Kids' Cancer Project holds quarterly webinars called Behind the Science which feature researchers whose projects have been funded by the charity. Behind the Science offers the opportunity to learn more about the pioneering researchers and their projects our wonderful donors and partners have supported.

In FY22 Behind the Science featured:



Professor Irina Vetter who is customising an over-the-counter arthritis drug to help stem the pain of neuropathy (severe pain in the end of fingers, migraines and footdrop following cancer treatment)



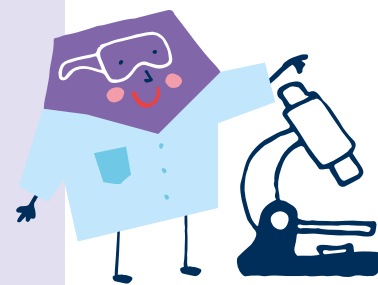
Associate Professor David Ziegler who is researching therapies to treat Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma, a rare and deadly brain tumour



Dr Andrew Care who is engineering an innovative natural nanoparticle (called a 'Protein Nanocage') that can selectively target and disrupt copper levels inside neuroblastoma, causing tumour cell death



Mary Burns a PhD Candidate, University of Sydney, who has created the Ready, Steady, School program to ensure kids and adolescents who have survived their cancer are cognitively, physically and logistically supported to continue their education.



Childhood Cancer Awareness

The devastating impact of childhood brain cancer is recognised every May during Brain Cancer Awareness Month, as well as every September as part of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month – 26 September being Australia's annual Childhood Brain Cancer Awareness Day. The aim of both is to raise public awareness of the impact of childhood brain cancer on patients, families and carers and to highlight the importance of childhood brain cancer research.

During September 2021, we were overwhelmed by the support of our incredible community during our inaugural Better Challenge. The challenge invites challengers to do 90km in whichever way they choose over the course of the month. Spurred on by Australian Paralympic skiing legend, Michael Milton OAM, the Better Challenge raised an amazing \$1,048,716 to support medical research into childhood cancer.

The Kids' Cancer Project can only achieve such important work through the generosity of amazing individuals, families and partners.



THE FACTS



Childhood cancer is different to adult cancer.



Cancer is the leading cause of death of children by disease.



Three Australian families hear the words, "your child has cancer" every day.



Every year, approx. 950 Australian children are diagnosed with cancer.



Childhood cancer research helps adults too.

Our Board

The Kids' Cancer Project's Board is made up of a diverse range of industry-leading professionals, each bringing a unique skillset to aid with our leadership, strategic direction and governance. Our Board of Directors is also responsible for The Kids' Cancer Project overall performance and compliance.

Kazuma Naito Chair

Kaz Naito most recently served as a Managing Director and the Head of Sales and Marketing for J.P. Morgan Australia and New Zealand for their Markets and Custody businesses. He also served on the Board of J.P. Morgan Securities Australia Limited. Prior to assuming this Australasian role in August 2019, Kaz was the J.P. Morgan Asia Pacific Head of Sales and Trading for the Prime Finance business based in Hong Kong. Kazuma was also a member of the J.P. Morgan Global Prime Finance Management Team as well as the Asia-Pacific Sales and Marketing Management team. Prior to his 10-year career at J.P. Morgan, Kaz spent over 15 years working for Goldman Sachs in Hong Kong, London and Tokyo in their Equity Derivatives business. Kaz received an L.L.B from Keio University in Japan. Kaz lives with his wife, Catherine, and their four children on Sydney's Northern Beaches.



Tim Rose

Tim Rose is the Director of Sales for Nine Plus (ASX:NEC). Nine Plus is a national sales team within Australia's largest media organisation, producing television, radio, print and digital advertising campaigns for thousands of businesses every year. Tim has 25 years of media, marketing and advertising experience, through his roles at APN Outdoor, WME-IMG, Huawei and Nine. He has formed strong and trusted business relationships with his customers, across every state and almost every industry sector. Tim has a BA in Media from Macquarie University, and he lives in Mosman with his wife Toulia, and his two young children. He is passionate about travel, technology, Rugby Union and taking his family to the beach.



Jessie Glew

Jessie is Joint Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer (COO) for the BlackWall Limited (ASX:BWF) and its funds. Jessie has been with BlackWall since early 2011. She was made COO in early 2018 and took on the Joint Managing Director role in late 2019. Jessie has a Bachelor of International Communication from Macquarie University and finalising a Bachelor of Property



Tim Blair

Tim Blair is founder of the Run for Kids Foundation, a philanthropic venture he started in 1994 after a diagnosis of epilepsy. Over the years, Tim has channelled his personal desire to be fitter and healthier into a way to raise awareness and funds for children with cancer. He believes kids are the biggest asset this world has and does all he can to enable them to be the best versions of themselves.



Sue Anderson BBus, EBMA

Sue is the Founder and Director of Management Consulting Firm Co Squared. Her speciality lies in applied innovation to support government, property and broad business sectors as they evolve and transform. Sue discovered the importance of research into childhood cancer when her daughter Audrey was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour at age five. Audrey is now finding her way in high school and life with a positive outlook.



Richard Caldwell BCom (Finance and Accounting)

Richard was a Chartered Accountant with Ernst & Young before moving into Stockbroking. Richard's son Archie was diagnosed with high-risk neuroblastoma at just three years of age, which motivates Richard's ongoing involvement with The Kids' Cancer Project and his desire to have a positive impact on the lives of other kids with cancer. Thankfully, Archie is now twelve and enjoying life in middle school.



Col Reynolds OAM, Founder

Col's contribution to the lives of children with cancer was officially recognised with an Order of Australia in 2000. Before founding the charity, Col was a tourist coach driver. He dedicated 30 years of his life to his profession, during which time he looked after many high profile clients including US Secret Service agents and members of the Papal visit of Pope John Paul II.



Simonne Reynolds BCom (Marketing and Management), Masters (Military and Defence Studies)

Simonne is a founding member of The Kids' Cancer Project Board and is an officer in the Australian Army. Simmone is passionate about people and is pursuing further postgraduate study in human resource management. Earlier in her career, Simmone spent nine years working in the fast moving consumer goods sector holding positions in marketing, national account management and category development for blue chip multinationals Unilever Australasia and Nestlé.



Debra Singh

Debra was the Group CEO Household Goods for Greenlit Brands overseeing Fantastic Furniture, Plush, OMF and Freedom, and was also an Executive Director on the Board until March 2020 when she transitioned into semi-retirement. She has more than 30 years of experience in General Management, Retail Operations, Organisational Design, Human Resources and Change Management. Prior to this, Debra had a career with Woolworths spanning more than a decade during which she was the first female to lead a trading division. Debra is also a member of the Chief Executive Women's (CEW) organisation as well as holding the position of Non-Executive Director on the Board of the Shaver Shop (ASX: SSG).



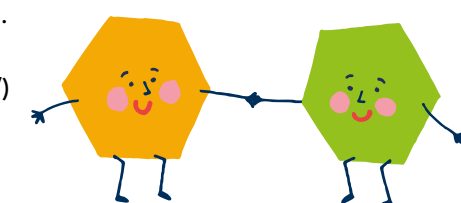
Cathryn Prowse LLB (Hons), Bec

Cathryn is a law partner at Colin Biggers & Paisley practising both insurance and employment law. She is in the 2018, 2019 and 2020 editions of The Best Lawyers in Australia in the field of insurance law for her work acting on behalf of professionals and entities facing negligence claims. In the employment space, she acts for employers in unfair dismissal, general protection, discrimination, underpayment OH&S and other workplace-related claims.



Nigel Everard FCPA, BCom, Grad Cert (Mgmt), MBA

Nigel is Managing Director Oceania at one of the largest inflight global catering companies. Prior to this he was the Director of Operations Oceania. He has been CFO of a leading Australian quick service restaurant business. Throughout his 20-year career, he has held senior positions in operations, general management, finance, strategy and business improvement. Nigel has been deployed in Asia and Europe working in various industries including automotive, aviation, quick service restaurants and the not-for-profit sector.



FY 22

Research Overview

The Kids' Cancer Project provides seed funding for pioneering Australian scientific research.

When awarding financial grants, The Kids' Cancer Project engages an expert Research Advisory Committee (RAC) to independently review all submissions and score them against key criteria. The RAC then presents their recommendations to The Kids' Cancer Project board which then makes the final decision on the studies to be funded each financial year.

In October 2021, the CEO of The Kids' Cancer Project, Owen Finegan, announced an investment of \$1 million into research.

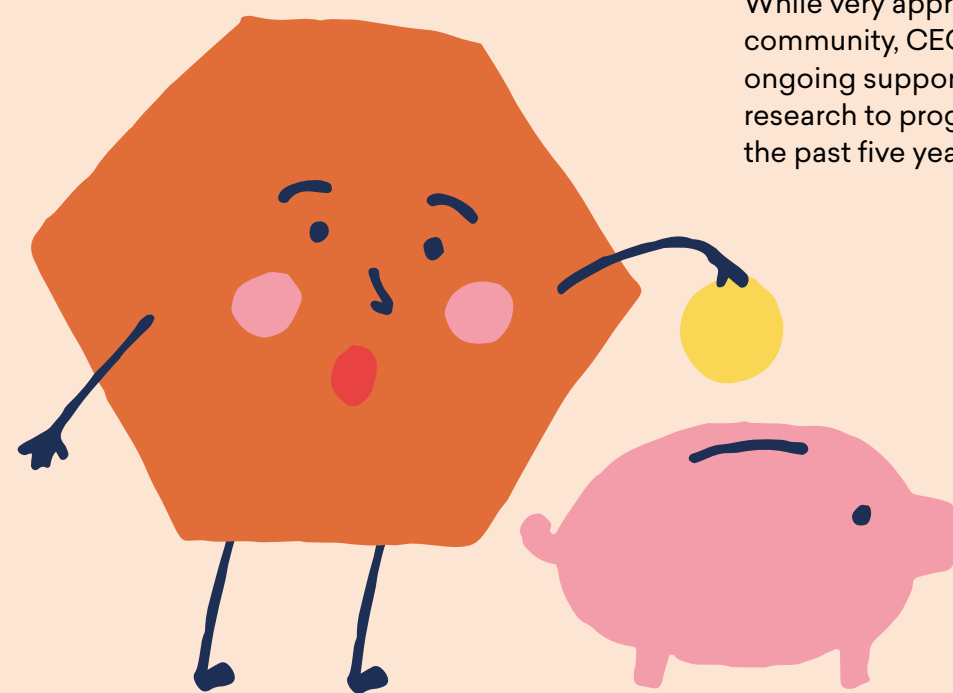
The winning projects include laboratory studies as well as clinical trials across a variety of childhood cancers such as acute myeloid leukaemia, sarcoma, and high-grade paediatric gliomas.

Two of the studies will be investigating the late effects of cancer treatment on growing bodies in the hope of providing overall better outcomes for children diagnosed with the disease.

In total ten successful projects have been awarded a share of more than \$3 million over the next three years to help further understanding about childhood cancer and develop cures that are kinder and more effective.

Each month in Australia, approximately 90 children aged 0 – 19 years of age are diagnosed with cancer. As many as 90 percent of kids who survive will develop one or more chronic health conditions as a result of treatment.

While very appreciative of our support community, CEO Owen Finegan says that the ongoing support of the community is critical for research to progress even more than it has over the past five years.



"GOVERNMENT FUNDING STRETCHES ONLY SO FAR, IT'S UP TO THE AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO PICK UP THE SHORTFALL TO HELP FUND SCIENTIFIC WORK THAT HAS THE GREATEST CHANCE OF CLINICAL SUCCESS. WHETHER SUPPORT COMES FROM CORPORATE PARTNERS, FUNDRAISERS EVENTS, DONORS OR PEOPLE LEAVING A BEQUEST IN THEIR WILL THEY WILL BE MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO KIDS WITH CANCER BY SUPPORTING RESEARCH."

- Owen Finegan, CEO of The Kids' Cancer Project



Investing in New Research

Where the money was invested:



\$3.005M awarded in multi-year funding of childhood cancer research



42 new projects funded



17 scientists supported



2 clinical trials



1 clinical trial conference

Research priorities:

30

projects aimed at improving survival and treatments

21

projects to combat the late effects of treatment

12

projects focused on adolescents and young adults

13

projects improving access to care

Cancer types:

18

brain cancer specific projects

12

projects for multiple cancer types

10

sarcoma specific projects

2

neuroblastoma specific projects

1

project for solid tumours

In FY22 The Kids' Cancer Project awarded \$3.005M in multi-year funding to ten innovative research projects.

The winning projects include laboratory studies as well as clinical trials across a variety of childhood cancers such as acute myeloid leukaemia (blood cancer), sarcoma (bone cancer), and high-grade paediatric gliomas (brain cancer).

Two of the studies will be investigating the late effects of cancer treatment on growing bodies in the hope of providing overall better outcomes for children diagnosed with the disease.

A total of ten successful projects have been awarded a share of more than \$3 million over the next three years. This generous investment supports further understanding childhood cancer and developing cures that are kinder and more effective with the aim of bringing about a 100 percent healthy survival of Australian children post-cancer.

Each month in Australia, approximately 90 children aged 0 – 19 years of age are diagnosed with cancer. Currently as many as 90 percent of

kids who survive will develop one or more chronic health conditions because of treatment.

In awarding the grants, The Kids' Cancer Project engages an expert Research Advisory Committee (RAC) to independently review all submissions and score them against key criteria. The RAC presents their recommendations to The Kids' Cancer Project Board who make the final decision on the studies to be funded each financial year.

"AS FANTASTIC AS IT IS TO CELEBRATE AND ANNOUNCE ALL THE WINNING GRANTS, IT'S IMPORTANT TO NOTE THERE WERE MANY MORE DESERVING APPLICATIONS THAT MISSED OUT DUE TO OUR FUNDING CAPABILITY THIS FINANCIAL YEAR. THIS MAKES THE ONGOING SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNITY CRITICAL — WHETHER THEY BE CORPORATE PARTNERS, FUNDRAISERS, DONORS OR PEOPLE LEAVING A GIFT IN THEIR WILL."

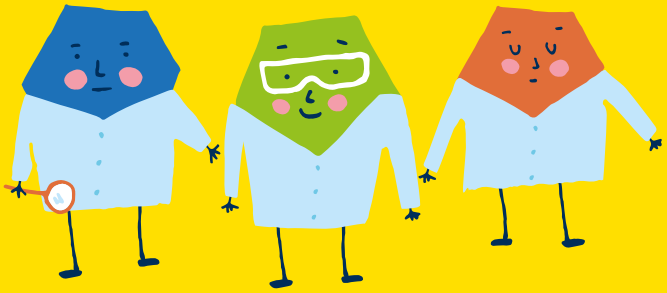
- Owen Finegan, CEO of The Kids' Cancer Project

Winners of The Kids' Cancer Project FY22 Grant Round

- **Professor Nick Gottardo**, Telethon Kids Institute. *Enhancing radiation therapy using brain specific immunotherapy to improve survival outcomes for children with aggressive brain cancer.*
- **Professor Ricky Johnstone**, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre. *Targeting altered serine metabolism in MLL-rearranged paediatric AML.*
- **Professor David Ziegler and Dr Dannielle Upton**, Children's Cancer Institute. *Targeting the thioredoxin system as a novel strategy for Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma.*
- **Associate Professor Matt Dun**, The University of Newcastle. *Pharmaco-phospho-proteogenomics of paediatric high-grade glioma.*
- **Ms Lauren Ha**, School of Health Sciences, UNSW, Behavioural Sciences Unit, Kids Cancer Centre, Sydney Children's Hospital. *iBounce: A digital health educational program to improve childhood cancer survivors' self-efficacy to engage in physical activity.*
- **Professor Irina Vetter**, Queensland University of Technology. *Reducing long-term side-effects of chemotherapy in cancer survivors.*

- **Dr Emmy Fleuren and Dr Emmy Dolman**, Children's Cancer Institute. *Exploiting the DNA damage response in paediatric sarcoma.*
- **Professor Glenn Marshall**, Children's Cancer Institute, Kids Cancer Centre, Sydney Children's Hospital. *Simultaneous detection of chemotherapy resistance and targeted agent sensitivity using single cell sequencing of residual malignant tissues as a measure of early sarcoma treatment responses.*
- **Associate Professor Geoff McCowage**, Children's Hospital at Westmead, ANZCHOG. *INTER-EWING-1: INTERNATIONAL scientific program in clinical research to improve outcomes of newly diagnosed EWING sarcoma - trial 1.*

- **Dr Jacqui McGovern**, Queensland University of Technology. *From bench to bedside – Developing an osteosarcoma precision oncology workflow.*



The Accidental Leukaemia Specialist

After finishing his medical studies and junior medical officer training in the United Kingdom, Dr Rishi Kotecha arrived in Australia in 2003 for a year-long working holiday.



Little did he know that he would go on to oversee the treatment of every child and adolescent with leukaemia in Western Australia.

As one year turned into another, then another, he made the decision to complete his postgraduate studies in Australia and build his career here and, in turn, unintentionally discovered paediatric oncology as his preferred speciality. He says:

“I was working at Princess Margaret Hospital and during my training I was rostered to the paediatric oncology unit, which I found to be very heart-wrenching and I thought, this is not for me. Then I got rostered to do it again and I started to see the patients that I’d seen the first time who were cured by their treatment.

“It was incredibly heart-warming to hear them tell me that I had had a massive impact on their life and that they’d remember me for forever. Even 18 years later, a lot of them stay in touch, sending me photos and emails.”

Dr Kotecha is driven by a need to know more, which is fortunate for those under his care, and has seen him relentlessly pursue ways to improve treatment for children and adolescents with leukaemia.

The paediatric leukaemia specialist wears many hats in his quest to improve treatment for cancer patients. One of those roles is as a member of the Children’s Oncology Group and the international BFM Study Group, which are responsible for the design and implementation of clinical trials for children with leukaemia worldwide.

While working full-time at the hospital, Dr Kotecha undertook his PhD. It was a period of intense work, which saw him splitting his time between his patients and his laboratory-based research, clocking up more than 100 hours a week. Dr Kotecha continues:

“I used to wake up very early in the morning, go to the lab and set my experiments up, start clinic around 8.30, and at lunchtime I’d run back over to the lab again for about an hour, then go back to the clinic in the afternoons, and then in the evenings, analyse all the results from the lab. It was crazy, but you know, it’s something I was passionate about.”

Dr Kotecha established the Leukaemia Translational Research Laboratory, which sits within the Telethon Kids Cancer Centre at the Telethon Kids Institute, Perth, and says a lot of patients want to contribute back by donating their tumour samples to research. Those samples are then used to generate models of leukaemia in the laboratory and test new drugs that aren’t currently being used to treat patients.

Dr Kotecha is specifically focused on improving outcomes for infants with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL), and says:

“The Kids’ Cancer Project has generously funded me in the past to look at the outcomes for babies with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia diagnosed before their first birthday.

“Last century, a diagnosis of ALL was associated with palliative care. Current survival rates have improved to exceed 90 percent in standard-risk patients. Unfortunately, infants diagnosed at less

than one year of age remain an exception to this success.

“About 80% of those babies have a genetic rearrangement in their leukaemia cells that makes it very aggressive - their survival is less than 40%.”

Dr Kotecha aims to help change these statistics by splitting his focus between patient care and clinical research. His research, funded by The Kids’ Cancer Project, has informed the release of a new paper that looks at the effects of a drug designed for babies with this aggressive form of leukaemia. He says:

“This paper is important because it showed that this particular drug didn’t provide any additional benefit to patients. It tells clinicians that this is probably not a drug that we should be testing or using in this patient population. It prevents more harm from being done.”

This research work is only made possible by sourcing funding from organisations, such as The Kids’ Cancer Project. Dr Kotecha says this funding has been invaluable in helping him develop his research:

“When I started it was very small, we’ve been able to expand the scope of our projects and work that we’re doing through the support of this type of funding. With the help of donations to charities like The Kids’ Cancer Project, he hopes his work will go on to have real-world impacts for those going through childhood cancer.

“We aim to establish a full circle. We get the sample from the patient, it comes to the lab bench where we can test novel treatments and we then plan for efficacious treatments to be translated back to the bedside again, to actually improve outcomes for patients.”

Dr Rishi Kotecha image courtesy of the Community Newspaper Group.

iBounce – helping kids’ stay healthy after cancer

Kids’ cancer research is looking into the future to ensure not just survival, but a healthy, happy life. Lauren Ha is an accredited exercise physiologist and a PhD candidate in the School of Health Sciences, UNSW Medicine & Health, and at the Behavioural Sciences Unit at the Kids Cancer Centre.

Her research interests surround exercise oncology and public health. Lauren’s work in exercise oncology hopes to decrease the late health impacts of treatment by promoting the importance of physical activity in survivors.

When kids are diagnosed with cancer, they are often exposed to harsh treatments, including chemotherapy, radiotherapy and surgeries. Such treatments at a young age not only affect their growth and development but also typically increase the survivors’ risks of suffering future chronic health conditions.

Lauren says that many people don’t realise the impact cancer has on a child’s future wellbeing: “When a child is cured of cancer it’s absolutely fantastic. But a lot of people don’t realise that the child is still likely to go through a lot of health problems beyond cancer.”

Over 950 children are diagnosed with cancer each year in Australia, and while over 80 per cent will survive, they are up to 15 times more likely to develop cardiovascular disease compared to their peers. “This is where physical activity comes in,” says Lauren.

Lauren’s ground-breaking digital health program iBounce is being funded by The Kids’ Cancer Project to further test a program she modified an already existing program, called iEngage®. The program helps survivors of childhood cancer in their own homes and teaches them about making regular movement a part of their lives. Amidst the lengthy and exhausting hospital experience, exercise can often, understandably, take a back seat to survival. Lauren continues to say:



“iBounce is a patient-centred intervention that engages young survivors in physical activity. After such a long time in hospital and having gone through harsh treatments, sometimes the last thing kids want to do is be physically active.

“iBounce is all online, so users can connect via the app that connects to activity trackers. Not only do we teach them how to monitor their physical activity, but we also teach them how to further improve the amount they’re doing to ensure they’re being active enough.”

It’s not just about the kids, Lauren notes. The program aims to also involve family members, particularly parents, to ensure the child is surrounded by people who are championing the importance of exercise.

“Kids and adults worldwide are not active enough. But it’s even more crucial for those who’ve been through cancer treatment to remain active. iBounce shows users how to do different types of exercise at home and engage family and friends. They don’t have to come back to the hospital to be part of the program. They don’t have to go to a clinic or a gym. They can do it in their own home, with their family.”

During iBounce’s pilot program, parents highlighted the value in the conversations it prompted surrounding exercise and physical health with their child. Lauren was pleased to see iBounce facilitated activities that encouraged the

whole family to join in the exercise. Some parents noted that they didn’t realise how much fitness their child had lost and saw iBounce as a program that got them talking about the importance of physical activity and healthy eating.

“For parents with sick children, sometimes their own health isn’t a priority. They are often quite stressed, emotionally and financially. But making time to support the child to be physically active, even in passive ways like driving them to sport, can be an excellent start.”

iBounce has already gone through pilot testing. Funding from The Kids’ Cancer Project will help move Lauren’s research forward to the next stage, she says:

“The generosity of donors and The Kids Cancer Project means so much for my project. I’m excited to collaborate with young survivors and their families, to listen to their lived experiences. I can’t wait to work with them to develop iBounce into a version that’s viable for all survivors to use, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and rural areas.”

Lauren will also be researching whether participating in the iBounce program improves a child’s confidence to continue exercising following cancer treatment. After missing a great deal of school and other social opportunities, post-treatment years can be difficult to navigate. There’s a strong possibility that having good levels of fitness and being involved in sport could go some way toward reducing their risk of future health problems.

“We have found that more than 70 per cent of survivors don’t meet the recommended physical activity guidelines of at least 60 minutes per day. If we are able to increase even a small percentage of that, it would improve the lives of a lot of people.

“Ultimately, the funding the program has received will support iBounce to empower, educate and engage survivors and their families on the protective health benefits of physical activity.”

“GOVERNMENT FUNDING STRETCHES ONLY SO FAR, IT’S UP TO THE AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO PICK UP THE SHORTFALL TO HELP FUND SCIENTIFIC WORK THAT HAS THE GREATEST CHANCE OF CLINICAL SUCCESS.”

- attribute?



TOTAL FUNDS RAISED PER STREAM:

Individual Giving:	\$3,658,689
Community:	\$2,546,275
Bears:	\$1,264,442
Partnerships:	\$1,605,371
Raffles:	\$310,314
ACTUAL TOTAL	\$9,385,090

Individual giving



For most of us, Covid 19 was the first global pandemic of our lifetime and its impact saw the non-profit landscape change in unexpected ways. With lockdown ensuring usually busy people had more time on their hands, many charities had their most successful Tax Appeal in years. This was due to donors reading appeal letters, following social media posts and welcoming a chat with a fundraiser.

The Kids' Cancer Project is a national charity with only 20 members of staff. Telemarketers help us cover such vast territory by calling donors to chat with them about the diverse ways they can support medical research into childhood cancer. With continued lockdowns, the number, availability and capacity of calling agents significantly dropped, particularly in the first half of FY22.

During this period, the income usually raised from calling did not meet its expected target. However, a significant silver lining was found with approximately 3,000 new and reactivated regular givers exceeding the target for this key area and so successfully rounding out the year.

In FY22 a new lockdown occurred, but this time it came with uncertainty and financial stress, particularly for small businesses. While another lockdown meant reduced social spending, at least in the initial stages, donations continued to be strong. But as the year went on and the lockdown continued, giving capacity started to dwindle. The Kids' Cancer Project's Christmas For A Cure direct mail appeal, a matched giving campaign, achieved just under 94% of its target by the end of the fiscal year meaning that donors still had a strong awareness of need, but cracks were starting to show.

In line with a strategic focus on cost-efficient programs, in FY22 the charity ceased its telemarketing raffle program replacing it with smaller digital raffles conducted online. This meant no administrative costs with a minimum of 50% of the ticket sale going to directly support The Kids' Cancer Project. It was an extremely lucky year for The Kids' Cancer Project supporters with two generous supporters taking home the 1st

prize (\$250,000 prize pack!) in two out of the four raffles conducted.

One of our most loved ways of fundraising is our Bear Program. Bear donations stayed strong and finished ahead of budget, reinforcing the appeal of bringing comfort to kids in hospital while also supporting childhood cancer research. Telemarketing again helped make bears the most successful income source in FY22. This success points again to the idea that while in lockdown, for about half the year (more in some states), donors had time to welcome calls and conversations.

By the end of the financial year over 18,000 bears had been donated to more than 70 hospitals and over 1,000 bears were bought as home purchases. The Bear Program generated over \$1,200,000 in funds for childhood cancer research.

Most lockdowns were lifted from January 2022 with much of the community embracing the opportunity to make up for lost time with social spending significantly increased. During this time major gifts raised \$233,957 and The Kids' Cancer Project is very appreciative of such generosity with many of our donors giving more than usual. We warmly acknowledge our loyal major givers, many of whom prefer to remain anonymous. Their continued generosity greatly adds to the number of research projects that can be supported.

BEQUESTS

Every year, some extremely generous donors choose to include a gift to The Kids' Cancer Project in their Will. We were humbled to receive bequests from seven compassionate people. The gifts in their Wills totalled \$21,202 to support pioneering research into children's cancers.

We also received news from a further 29 people that they have decided to leave a gift in their Will to The Kids' Cancer Project. No matter the amount, a bequest is a wonderful legacy to help kids with cancer. Leaving a gift in your Will is a very special way to ensure your values live on and help research into childhood cancer continue making great strides forward.

The Beary Important work of Teddys

If you've ever donated one of The Kids' Cancer Project teddy bears to a child in hospital, you'll know that your donation brings comfort, but did you know you're also helping to fund vital childhood cancer research? As well as being cute companions there are four vital ways The Kids' Cancer Project's bears help kids with cancer cope during their time in hospital and beyond. Two paediatric experts, Ariella Lew and Deb Herdman, share why, when it comes to deciding what toys to donate to children in hospital, you should think no further than our soft and snuggly teddy bears.

A teddy for procedure preparation

Ariella Lew is an experienced paediatric nurse and Founder and Director of Kids on Track Consultancy. Ariella recalls the first time she watched a play therapist give a child a teddy bear to demonstrate the procedure that they were going to have done.

"The child watched in wonder and couldn't believe it when they were given the teddy bear to keep... Using teddy bears as a preparation toy or as the marking of a milestone procedure is a wonderful way to allow children to articulate their thoughts, feelings and fears through play and also to be allowed to continue to process this as they get to keep the teddy."

A teddy for therapy

Teddy bears are a simple and holistic alternative that benefit children in all phases of illness from diagnosis, treatment cycles and their recovery phase, says Deb Herdman, a Nurse Sleep Specialist and creator of Nigh Nigh, a sleep consultancy and sleep resources company. Deb says:

"Cuddling your favourite teddy not only gives psychological comfort as a companion, friend and confidant but also has benefits to physical health. By helping to release hormones that make you feel less stressed and anxious means vital signs like respiratory rate and heart rate regulate and less anxiety, which can mean less pain. Teddies are tangible, can be cuddled, stroked, dressed and spoken to, providing comfort whenever it's needed."

A teddy for sensory stimulation

"The comforting nature of cuddling a teddy bear is huge and for many children gives a dose of a sensory stimulation often missing in hospital in a sterile environment," says Ariella.

"The feeling of a teddy bear who becomes a friend replacement (like a pet or friend from the outside world) is something I have witnessed many times and is lovely to see. I have watched many a health professional talk to children through their teddy bears!"

A teddy for life

One of the most amazing things about teddy bears that Ariella has observed is that their appeal often isn't linked to age. She says:

"I know of patients now grown up who have teddy bears on their own children's beds that remind them of their journeys and of times that they overcame. These rewards, in the form of teddy bears in these instances, are comforting and safe reminders of a difficult time and what has survived. They can almost become family heirlooms!"



Giving comfort to kids who need it most

Since 2009, tonnes of cuddly teddies have been donated anonymously to children in hospital through The Kids' Cancer Project's bear program. Generous donors ensure that staff working in over 70 participating hospitals around Australia have a stock of bears at the ready to bring comfort to sick kids when they're lonely or anxious about their treatment.

But comfort isn't all these bears provide. The proceeds of all bear sales go directly to funding childhood cancer research to help the 950 Australian kids diagnosed with the disease every year. To date, the funding provided solely by bear donations and sales is in the millions of dollars.

Due to privacy laws, donors aren't able to be connected with the child who receives the bear they have kindly donated, however many parents get in touch with The Kids' Cancer Project on social media to thank the generous souls and share how meaningful the gift is. Here are a few of those recent posts:

"THANK YOU! JOSHUA WAS REALLY STRUGGLING WITH HIS CHEMOTHERAPY AND RECEIVED THIS DOCTOR BEAR. IT HELPED CALM HIM ENOUGH TO GET SOME REST!"

- Betty O

"MY SON HAS BRAIN CANCER AND HAS A COUPLE OF THE BEARS. THIS ONE I PERSONALISED WITH AN NG TUBE. THEY REALLY DO MAKE CHILDREN HAPPY"

- Chontelle S

"MY DAUGHTER NAMED HER DINOSAUR SKY. SHE WAS SO HAPPY AND EXCITED WHEN SHE RECEIVED HER. THEY ARE THE MOST BEAUTIFULLY MADE BEARS, THANK YOU TO ALL WHO DONATE THEM."

- Chantelle M

"THESE BEARS ARE GREAT, NOT JUST FOR THE LITTLE KIDS BUT THE BIG ONES TOO WHO ARE GOING THROUGH A REALLY ROUGH TIME. IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE. MY SON HAS SUCH A LONG ROAD AHEAD OF HIM. THANKS FOR ALL THE DONATIONS THAT ARE MADE!"

- Shelly T



A huge thank you to everyone who kindly donates bears, not only giving comfort to kids in hospital when they need it most, but also helping to fund further lifesaving kids' cancer research.

Donors are a major gift to research

The Kids' Cancer Project prides itself on investing in pioneering projects that have the greatest chance of success. But medical research into childhood cancer requires time - it's a long way from discovery to treatment. In fact, it can take years to progress from the lab to a clinical trial to treatment. And, as well as time, research requires continued major funding.

When it comes to advancing research the importance of major gifts cannot be overlooked.

Support from our major donors, incredibly generous people who give thousands of dollars and often more each year, not only contributes to our success in funding innovative research but also shows their trust in our choice of ground breaking Australian researchers.

Over the past few years, The Kids' Cancer Project has been fortunate to receive major gifts that have paid for entire research projects, enabling those researchers to continue their amazing work without having to spend valuable time away from the lab to fundraise.

On reaching out to our major donors to thank

them for their generosity, they remain humble with most saying they simply give to help kids with cancer survive and live healthier lives. Some have firsthand experience of childhood cancer either as a child or a family member and are determined to create a future where kids enduring cancer will be a thing of the past.

No matter their individual motivations, all of them support The Kids' Cancer Project's mission to see a future where treatment for kids will be kinder and all will go on to have a long, healthy, and happy life.

Giving to science to find a solution to ensure a child's survival is a philanthropy of both the heart and head. Thank you to all our donors who strive to do more.



Our incredible corporate partners

A huge thanks to all our corporate partners, supporters and associations who continually support our mission. This support is a tribute to strong corporate social responsibility and a commitment to see childhood cancer research thrive in Australia, something that will ultimately have a meaningful impact on the lives of children with cancer. Below are some of our highlights from FY22.



For the fourth year in a row, Lorraine Lea held its annual month-long fundraiser, Party for Kids with Cancer in yet another COVID affect year. As a family-owned business that has been touched by cancer, they are fiercely determined to make an impact on childhood cancer.



Likewise, in FY22 Bromic continued its generous support of The Kids' Cancer Project and engages its staff, customers and suppliers in their fundraising efforts. Inspired by the community spirit fostered by The Kids' Cancer Project's new fundraising initiative, The Better Challenge, they dubbed their second annual Go Kart Derby 'The Bromic Better Challenge'. Once again, teams built Go Karts created entirely from materials found on-site that could be powered by natural propulsion, proving a fun and eco-friendly way to fundraise for a good cause.



RAMS extended their amazing support for a fourth year, donating generously as well as finding new ways to support our cause. RAMS became a matching partner for two of our events, The Better Challenge and Christmas for a Cure. Their welcome collaboration for the second year in a row on The Kids' Cancer Project charity golf day proved to make it another hugely successful event.



Apricity Finance has generously supported our work for many years. Always looking for new ways

to increase their support, they didn't hesitate to be the charity partner for The Kids' Cancer Project's second golf day in NSW. While they might not have managed a hole-in-one as regular attendees of The Kids' Cancer Project events, they are aces in our book.



Sharp Extensive IT held its inaugural State of Origin charity event at the spectacular Cruising Yacht Club in Sydney. The event was not only an opportunity to fundraise for The Kids' Cancer Project but also to expose Sharp Extensive IT clients to our mission. The event was a huge success raising significant funds for medical research into childhood cancer.



Rondo has been a proud partner since 2019, pledging to raise funds through various activities across their Australian operations. Rondo participates in The Kids' Cancer Project golf events as well as organising localised initiatives to raise money and awareness. The Rondo annual race day on the Gold Coast saw generous Rondo customers donate an incredible amount to The Kids' Cancer Project.



A huge thanks to Smartways Logistics, a medical courier company, that has brought smiles to the faces of thousands of seriously ill kids. The team deliver our cute and cuddly bears to eastern seaboard hospitals at absolutely no cost, saving us hundreds of thousands of dollars which can be re-directed to funding more research.

OUR OTHER AMAZING PARTNERS INCLUDE:

SAS and Colin Biggers & Paisley continued their support by providing significant pro-bono data insight and legal advice. Both organisations attended TKCP events and made contributions towards the events being successful.

Taren Cleaning Supplies and Sirron Holdings Group also joined forces to support The Kids' Cancer Project's Pirate Day campaign by becoming a naming rights partner. Both companies contributed to the success of the campaign and extended their support by attending events and inviting the Partnerships team to their annual conference.

We are also very fortunate to have the wonderful support of Serco Facilities Management, Bartercard, Bayer, Fast Automation, Myer, Express Glass and Stylecraft. Their continued commitment to The Kids' Cancer Project by attending events, hosting events, providing auction items, partner introductions and contributing significantly towards fundraising is greatly appreciated.

The Better Challenge

We were incredibly fortunate that our inaugural Better Challenge attracted the support of many current and new partners. At a time when businesses around Australia were looking for ways to engage with their employees due to COVID restrictions, The Better Challenge encouraged people to walk, run or roll 90kms over one month whilst raising vital funds for kids' cancer research. It proved an ideal solution to keep employees engaged and fit with the added benefit of supporting a worthy cause. In total over 40 corporations participated in The Better Challenge and help us raise a total of over \$1 million!

Association in Partnerships

Facilities Management Association (FMA) supported The Kids' Cancer Project through their calendar of events. Air Conditioning and mechanical Contractors' Association (ACMA) were proud to offer their support raising funds and awareness through their states' offices, members donations and annual golf days. Strata Community Association kindly supported our work via their annual NSW golf event raising funds and awareness for TKCP.

Corporate events

The Kids' Cancer Project hosted five successful corporate events including the much-anticipated inaugural Women in Business lunch in Sydney. Rounding out the year were Christmas for a Cure, two NSW golf days and our online auction – Big Bids for Kids. A huge thank you not only to our partners but to everyone who attended and kindly donated.

Trusts and Foundations

Aligned to the Partnerships portfolio are philanthropic grants from Trusts and Foundations which generously support The Kids' Cancer Project enabling even more research projects to be funded. We were delighted when Perpetual Trustees granted another significant sum to support two key research projects.

Additionally, the Thyne Reid Foundation has proved a stalwart providing funding for a fifth year facilitating the employment of a digital manager to assist the charity with digital operations across the board. Grants were also awarded from the Count Charitable Foundation, Lesa Jackson via Keystone Private, Sarah Woolridge and Kathleen Burrow Memorial Fund, JBWere Charitable Fund, Tim Blair Run for Kids Foundation and The Forrester Foundation.

Our fundraising campaigns

Whether you wrote a book, dressed as a pirate, baked a difference, or just went crazy with socks and hair you were a fundraising community champion for The Kids' Cancer Project. Here's what you helped to achieve in FY21-22.

Write a Book in a Day again proved to be a favourite activity amongst schools and writing groups, with over 507 teams participating in the 2021 competition. COVID lockdowns required flexibility within the competition with many schools coordinating teams writing remotely. But that didn't stop writers from achieving a fundraising total of \$595,790.

Several schools entered more than 20 teams with Brighton Secondary College (SA) entering 42 teams and St Mary MacKillop College Canberra (ACT) entering 33 teams. The incredible results showed how much the loyal participants, team coordinators, sponsors and supporters rally around this much-loved competition. And the kids in hospital who get to read the books were pretty excited too.

Pirate Day didn't disappoint delivering a treasure chest filled with \$183,512 for brain cancer research. Over 970 swashbuckling pirates jumped aboard, from early learning centres and schools to community groups and workplaces.

Our highest fundraisers were from Christ the King Primary School in North Rocks, who raised an incredible \$5,180. The school wanted to show support for a child within their community, Demi who has been diagnosed with DIPG. Funds raised were directed to Dr Danielle Upton's research investigating potential therapies for diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma (DIPG), a deadly brain tumour with not much hope for survival.

We also welcomed Taren Cleaning who joined the crew with a three-year naming-rights partnership. We were pleased to be able to help raise funds and awareness for the cause via Taren's staff, suppliers and clients.



Cupcakes 4 a Cure saw bakers rise to the occasion with 'self-raising dough-nations' to the tune of \$23,483. Kiara Atkinson of Cobram Bakery returned for her third consecutive event, more than doubling her fundraising effort from the previous year.

Another impressive cupcake session was initiated by mum, Sharlet. Following her young son, Kayse being diagnosed with bilateral Wilms tumours, a cancer of the kidneys, she became an advocate for childhood cancer research by holding a Cupcakes 4 a Cure event with cakes and raffle prizes from the local community. The day raised an incredible \$7,680! Well done to all cupcake participants!

Crazy Hair & Sock Day sees Netball NSW Associations continue to show their support by wearing crazy socks and sporting crazy hair. Despite COVID lockdowns and La Nina impacting their season, the Associations enjoyed dressing up in their silly socks and looney locks and raising funds and awareness totalling an impressive \$114,399. After years of greatly valued support, Fairfield City Netball Association made an incredible final donation of \$80,000.



Community heroes

"AUSTRALIANS KNOW WE MUST DO BETTER FOR KIDS DIAGNOSED WITH CANCER. SO, IT IS WITH GREAT PRIDE THAT AFTER THE GROUNDSWELL OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT THAT HAS COME THROUGH THE BETTER CHALLENGE, WE WILL BE ABLE TO FURTHER INVEST IN PIONEERING RESEARCH. EVERY ONE OF THE 3,000 PARTICIPANTS IN THE CHALLENGE, AND THE DONORS WHO SUPPORTED THEM, CAN SHARE IN THAT PRIDE, KNOWING THAT THEY ARE CONTRIBUTING TO FINDING CURES OF KIDS' CANCERS."

- Owen Finegan, CEO of The Kids' Cancer Project



The Better Challenge

The Kids' Cancer Project newest initiative, the Better Challenge was launched as a nationwide peer-to-peer challenge with community members urged to run, walk or roll 90kms to help fund cancer treatments to create a better future for kids with cancer. Held in September's Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, the challenge did not disappoint with a total of 306,210km being run, rolled and walked.

Social media delivered 3,275 engaged participants with corporate partners QBE and RAMS, and major donors matching the generous donations of 11,197 people, bringing our fundraising total to a huge \$1,048,716. While The Better Challenge's success over such a short time was unprecedented at its core was raising awareness of the impact of cancer treatment on kids' long-term health. As many as 90% of kids who survive will develop one or more chronic health conditions because of their treatment, simply because there is no alternative. We urged people to act, and they did.



The Larapinta Trail

Located on Arrernte land in the Northern Territory and running 223km across the majestic West MacDonnell Ranges west of Alice Springs, boasts some of the most breathtakingly beautiful sacred landscapes ever seen. It proved to be a trek of a lifetime for a total of 30 committed people taking on the challenge. In fact, the trip proved so popular a second trek was opened overlapping for a night with the first group.

Strangers walking for a common cause soon became mates as they trekked alongside each other sharing their own stories and experiences as they raised funds to support childhood cancer research. Along with families who have firsthand experience of a child with cancer several of The Kids' Cancer Project Board Members also joined the trek building a connection with their surroundings and our supporters. At the end of six days, an impressive \$172,000 had been raised. Well done to all!

Champions

The Kids' Cancer is fortunate to have many champions who work hard to raise funds so children with cancer can benefit from research breakthroughs. We are also honoured to have legends like Captain Australia and Mark Pacey who go above and beyond the bounds of physical endurance to deliver much-needed funds for childhood cancer research. Here's an overview of what our wonderful champions and legends have achieved over 2021-2022.

Captain Australia

Walking solo from Brisbane to Sydney, Captain Australia reached Sydney on 2nd February 2022 with The Kids' Cancer staff joining him as he crossed the iconic Harbour Bridge to cheers and salutations. Captain Australia raised \$164,810 to support childhood cancer research. He's now planning to walk around Australia.



Super Kids Super Heroes

Most kids are content to ride electric scooters around the local area, but the West Australia based Kane Family decided nothing short of a 650km ride from Perth to Bridgetown would do. Escorted by parents these 'Super Kids, Super Heroes' not only scored points for a momentous ride but also raised \$65,018 along the way.

The Bloody Long Day

Mark Pacey knows what it's like to watch a child suffer not only from their cancer but also its treatment. Mark's son, Cooper, was just seven when it was discovered he had kidney cancer. Thankfully Cooper survived. Knowing he was one of the lucky ones Mark vowed to raise funds for research and in 2019 he debuted The Bloody Long Day, a 24-hour ultra triathlon. This year Mark raised \$53,729 with 16 fundraisers joining him on their own Bloody Long Day.



Hundreds for Hope

When Ashlea and Ryan Giles' nine-month-old son, Nash, was diagnosed with an optic pathway glioma, a slow-growing brain tumour that connects to the eye, their endurance was exceptional. But as time wore on and Nash's vision diminished, Ashlea found herself struggling. Nash, now primary school-aged, still has regular check-ups but Ashlea is concerned about the treatments he received and how they might impact his health long-term. Ashlea gave up her corporate job to become a Studio Pilates franchisee and has begun fundraising through the franchise. Named for a Pilates core building exercise, Hundreds for Hope galvanised other Studio Pilates groups who rallied to raise funds totalling \$33,494 for The Kids' Cancer Project.

High Tea for a High Cause

After losing her little daughter Evie to cancer, Sarah Weir decided to host a high tea to honour her beloved child and to raise funds to help other children and so High Tea for a High Cause was created. The event brought together like-minded people looking to raise funds while enjoying a fresh, hot scone or perhaps a cheeky glass of champagne. Evie Weir's memory has been honoured by the High Tea supporters raising \$11,379 to fund research.



Local Hero

Jake De Kort was named Westfield Local Hero 2021 for being a dedicated volunteer for The Kids' Cancer Project helping to fundraise through his Blue Bottle project. Jake helped form Blue Bottle in memory of his sister Alana, who sadly passed away from Ewings Sarcoma just before her 15th birthday in 2018. Motivated by her bravery, Jake is dedicated to sharing her story, raising awareness and crucial funds to fight childhood cancer. He says: "My dream is that no family, friendship group or community will have to go through the experience mine did. I believe the true hero of our fundraising efforts is Alana. It's often hard to fundraise because of all the memories it brings back, but this nomination shows that the community is there to support us and help fight childhood cancer".

Information Technology

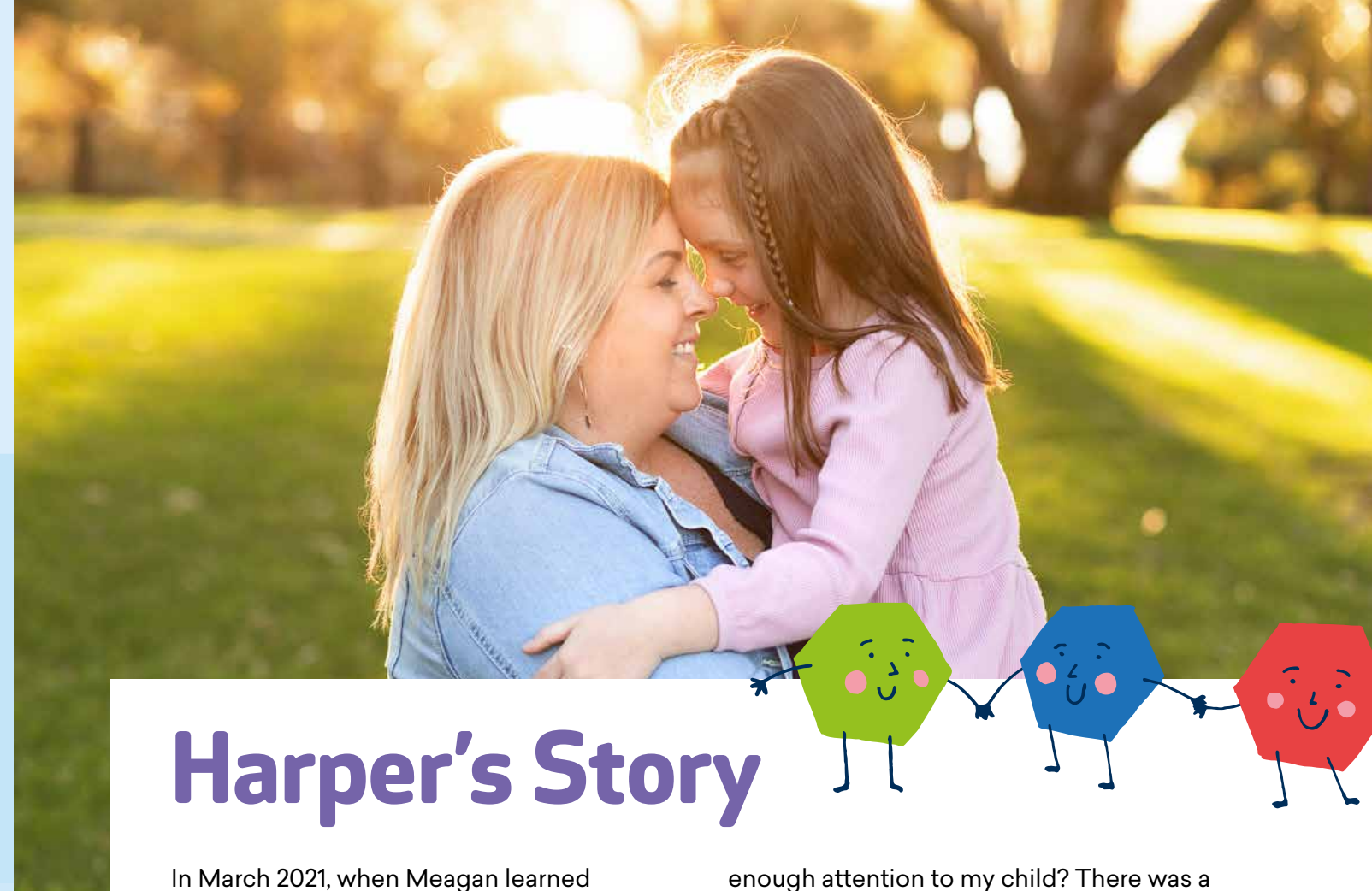
To deliver strong results and increase our investment in bold childhood cancer research, technological efficiency is a priority for The Kids' Cancer Project. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for a work environment that could easily access technology flexible enough to adapt to sudden changes.

While our former technology enabled staff to work remotely via a Virtual Private Network, over the past year we have progressed to be fully location independent. The Kids' Cancer Project recognises the support of our technology partners such as Microsoft and Zoom in providing us with cloud technologies such as M365 and Zoom meetings. These cloud tools improved our resilience by assigning maintenance tasks to the best in the industry while allowing us to spend more time focused on income-generating activities.

Cyber security is another area we continue to focus on. In the past year, we put in programs to train our staff on phishing techniques and have established a culture where all questions are welcome. We are proud that our primary systems are all protected by two-factor authentication and a robust email filtering system. We also partnered with MCR IT, a managed IT service provider with a strong focus on supporting NFPs.

With such a solid foundation, our current focus is to further develop our strength in data analysis to better understand our supporters' needs and provide them with the right information at the right time. This will build a pipeline between the data sources and the database delivering live information. Aligning with this initiative our staff are being trained to use tools such as PowerBI to relay key information to our stakeholders. This has been a key culture shift resulting in informed data guiding our fundraising and project activities. We are appreciative of being able to consult with SAS, an industry leader in data analysis.

The Kids' Cancer Project continues to progress in its technology roadmap to improve the way we all interact and work together to achieve the ultimate goal of curing childhood cancer. The IT team warmly thanks our donors, and many other technology partners such as IRESS and Slack, who donate their time and support our journey.



Harper's Story

In March 2021, when Meagan learned her beloved daughter, Harper, had a life-threatening brain tumour she made it her mission to raise the profile of childhood cancer. Meagan recalls 'blinking out' when she was first told of the diagnosis of a substantial tumour on her young daughter's brain and remembers little of the conversation with the doctor, such as the shock of her daughter's new reality.

To add to the surrealness of the situation Meagan discovered she was pregnant with her third child on the day doctors diagnosed Harper, she says:

"I spent 15 days in hospital with Harper from first diagnosis. And the first two-and-a-half months of my pregnancy, we didn't even acknowledge we were having a baby. Our world stopped for Harper."

Meagan had also started wondering if she should blame herself for five-year-old Harper's illness. Recalling her feelings at the time, she said:

"Is it because she fell off a swing when she was little? Is it because she hit her head? Why didn't I find out sooner? Wasn't I paying

enough attention to my child? There was a lot of mum guilt going on. I'm a stay-at-home mum, so I started wondering why I hadn't been more focused on her."

But in fact, Meagan had been absolutely aware that something was wrong, and for a long time had done everything in her power to find a solution.

For several months Harper had been experiencing unexplained episodes of vomiting and clumsiness. Following one such episode at school, the situation became even worse, Meagan continues:

"On the way home in the car, her eyes started rolling back in her head and her body sort of drooped." Paramedics suspected Harper was having a stroke, and by the time they arrived at the hospital, she was unresponsive.

Harper underwent a CT scan, revealing a substantial mass on her brain. It wasn't until after an 11-hour surgery at Perth Children's Hospital that she was diagnosed with ependymoma, a fast-moving and aggressive tumour. Fortunately, the growth, approximately 10 centimetres in diameter, was localised to one area of her brain.

“We found out the tumour was in the occipital lobe, where visual processing occurs. This explained why Harper was bumping into things and falling over during her clumsy moments,” Meagan explains. Surgeons removed the entire tumour. This left Harper with a 70% chance of the cancer never returning.

Next up for Harper was 33 sessions of boost radiation, carried out over six-and-a-half weeks. As ependymoma does not respond to chemotherapy, doctors used this therapy to target the tissue around where the tumour previously grew. During treatment, and despite losing her hair, Harper never once lost her positive outlook, Meagan says.

But it’s a different story now as the family deal with the aftermath of both the tumour’s growth and effects of treatment. The most devastating of which is permanent vision loss, Meagan says:

“There was a chance that Harper’s eyesight would improve once the fluid on her macular cleared up. But we’ve since been told that she is pretty much blind in the left eye and can only see minimal amounts like shadows and outlines in her right eye.

“She can still see enough to walk but needs assistance and has no depth perception. It’s gut wrenching knowing she will never be able to see properly again.”

Now six, Harper has returned to school. While exhausted at the end of each school day, she loves being with her friends again, and teachers have adjusted lessons to accommodate her vision loss.



When Harper was diagnosed it was difficult for Meagan to find information about ependymoma, a situation she found frustrating: “When we first found out it was a brain tumour, I turned to Google, even though you’re told not to. I discovered there’s been relatively little research done on brain tumours in kids over the last 30 years, compared to other cancers. But it’s the number one tumour that kills children.”

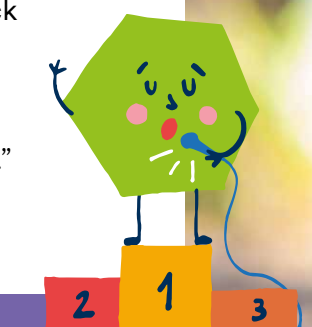
“Then we met Dr Nick Gottardo, who is a leader in children’s brain cancer research, and realised how fortunate we were to have him. He sent part of her tumour all around the world for testing, to make sure the treatment was as tailored as it could be.”





Since the diagnosis, Meagan has charted Harper’s progress on Facebook. The page, called ‘Harper’s Journey’, is a moving, informative and often humorous commentary on the harrowing trials and immense triumphs of a brave little girl. It’s part of Meagan’s larger quest to turn the spotlight on childhood cancer:

“Everything seems to be about adult cancers these days. Sometimes it feels as if kids’ brain cancers have been pushed under the rug. I’m trying to help bring them into the open.”

By organising sausage sizzles, raffles and auctions, she has raised over \$2,500 for kids’ cancer research.

The Kids’ Cancer Project funds Professor Nick Gottardo’s brain cancer research thanks to supporters like Meagan. But as Meagan says: “The more research I can fund the better the results will be for children with brain cancers.”



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