

Avelyn Wong  
Toronto, ON

## **Changing the World, One Child at a Time**

Patrick Swayze (famous actor) died of pancreas cancer last year. The doctors did all they could to save him, but sometimes cancer is unstoppable. There was lots of broken hearts and tears shed. A famous actor had just died of cancer. If you know someone who has died of cancer, perhaps you know how it feels. Or maybe if you have had a close friend or relative who died, you may know how Patrick Swayze's friends and relatives felt. Sad!

Patrick Swayze was a famous actor who danced his way to fame from dirty dancing. Viewers were amazed with this man but were disappointed when they heard about pancreas cancer. Patrick passed away peacefully. He faced challenges with his illness for twenty months. Although Patrick had known he was diagnosed, he kept on doing work and put together a memoir with his wife called "The Beast." It drew a lot of attention. Patrick Swayze sure was an actor with courage!

Having cancer is a terrible thing. Once you have it, you go through a lot of things to prevent it from killing you, but sometimes you can't. More and more people are dying of cancer in the whole world. The numbers increased from 7.9 million people to 11.5 million people! All suffering! Sadly, no one can fix this problem yet. Yes, it *is* depressing.

When someone has cancer, you can't stop feeling sorry for them. It's a natural instinct because the person usually knows that cancer may make him/her die. They feel depressed because they want to live and still be with their siblings, mum and dad etc. They also have to face the cancer challenges: chemotherapy, radiation therapy etc. I felt bad for my teacher Mrs. Holden whose mother died of cancer. I was so shocked and I almost hugged her. Too bad we can't do anything. Actually, maybe we can...

Someone who challenged the world was Maddy McCartney, my friend. She is ten years old, and just a normal girl that goes to the same school as me and in the same grade as me – grade five. She is very nice and generous. She is the main character of this article. She is humorous and loves to draw and sculpt things she does a lot of fun projects including making a dress. She is energetic and always bursting with ideas.

She changed the world because she grew her hair really long, and then cut her hair by ten inches. She did this because she wanted to donate her hair to people with cancer. After, her hair was pretty short, but she told me that she didn't care because all she wanted was to donate her hair. It reminded me of a saying: "to serve is better than to receive." We are considered lucky not to be the person receiving. Maddy did all she could to help. She had sympathy. She served and the cancer patient received.

Although Maddy didn't change the entire world by herself, she started to. Soon, after her, Sara Jessica Brade (another kid in our school) cut her hair too. She had seen Maddy's contribution to the sick people and wanted to cut her hair too. It all started from one girl. When I grow my hair long enough, if I can, I would like to donate my hair too! If everyone donated a bit of their hair to those people in need, then I'm positive that they would be much happier. Every little contribution helps!

Donating hair is good. When people have cancer, they might have to take a special treatment called chemotherapy. This treatment uses a machine to kill cancer cells but sometimes it kills good cells too. It may make the cancer patient's hair fall off. When people have cancer, it's very depressing. They might not even want to go outside or be seen by anyone because they're bald. It's quite sad, if you ask me. If you donate your hair, people can make wigs out of it and give them to cancer patients. Giving out wigs to those people makes a huge difference and helps the people adapt positively to life.

\*\*\*\*\*

This is a story of a female cancer patient. She lived a very normal life and she was happy. Until one day the doctor told her that she had breast cancer. She was so shocked. She took treatments and became bald. The treatments were light, so her hair grew back, surprisingly curly! It had not been curly before. One day, as she was walking a lady asked her where she had got her hair done. She smiled and said the Dana Farber Cancer Institute. That kind of shocked her, so she said "Sorry, I didn't mean that." It was till kind of funny. She was still in a good mood because the people said the cancer is severe. She enjoyed her hair for awhile; until she received news that the cancer was getting worse and that she needed to do treatments. She sat on the couch crying. She even had a son Bobby. She knew cancer equals death. She apologized to her relatives. She knew they didn't want her to die. She lost her hair and it would never grow back. The thought of losing her hair upset her.

\*\*\*\*\*

There is also another way to help cancer patients. You can donate money for them! If you do, maybe the doctors can afford to buy equipment needed to cure cancer and have funds to continue their research for a cure. Maybe the entire world could be cancer free one day. Imagine if someone cured cancer. Maybe the people who died of cancer would die of old age instead. Perhaps in the future our dream would come true. If you light up the darkness the people may follow. After all, it doesn't take superpowers to change the world!