



Aidan Hatfiled –
TNT Honored Hero, Summer FY12

Aidan has always been a happy go lucky boy with tons of energy. He did not have any major illnesses and childhood cancer does not run in the family.

In September 2009 he seemed run down and tired often. He would complain that he didn't have energy and would fall asleep for hours at school (eventually the school nurse called to question this odd behavior). I took him to his doctor and was told that he had an upper respiratory infection. He was given antibiotics and breathing treatments for 2 weeks. When he started to turn ashen in color and not get better, I took him to a different doctor.

That was on 11/19/2009.

That morning, Aidan complained his shoulder hurt and he brought it up to the doctor who decided to

have an x-ray of his shoulder taken at Children's Hospital. I blew it off as no big deal and said it's because he has been sleeping so much he probably laid on his shoulder the wrong way. We got the x-ray anyway and went home.

A few hours later, the doctor called back and said something didn't turn out right and we needed to have another x-ray.

Irritated that we had to drive all the way back to Children's hospital I advised we had appointments we could not miss and would not be able to get it redone until after 5:00 PM. The person who I had told this to was adamant that we have it retaken that day and said they would stay there until we got to the hospital. I shrugged it off as really good customer service.

But the second time he had the x-ray was different.

They didn't let us go after the x-ray was done. After an hour of waiting, I began to get nervous. It was already after 7:00 PM. The doctor called me at the hospital and said if Aidan were his son, he wouldn't go and come back tomorrow to have additional tests done. He advised that we go through the ER to have a CAT scan performed.

By this time, I knew something was wrong, I just didn't know the seriousness of the situation. I called my husband to take our other children to his parents and come to the hospital because I was not feeling comfortable with the situation anymore. By the time he arrived, we were in an ER room with numerous medical professionals and a member of the clergy filing in. At that point we were informed that Aidan had a tumor the size of a grapefruit wrapped around his trachea and major nerves. This tumor had collapsed his lung and pushed his heart into his shoulder which is why it hurt so much. Then the head of the ER said the words, "Your son has cancer."

WHAT?! NOT MY CHILD! He's ALWAYS been so HEALTHY!

That's the thing about cancer, it doesn't care who you are or how healthy you "used" to be.

I can still remember 11/19/09 like it was yesterday. My thoughts were all over the place. "OH MY GOD! My son is going to die! What about his brother? Does he have cancer too?" I am in shock and panic mode.

Aidan, he was calm. Clueless as to what everything meant and what the diagnosis would entail.

Aidan was diagnosed with NHL - Non Hodgkin's Lymphoma aggressive B cell...

Aidan spent almost his entire 2nd grade at Children's hospital. He was hooked up to chemo almost constantly. He endured spinal taps twice every week for almost 5 months while he was undergoing treatment.

I cannot begin to tell you how much pain he went through while having treatment. His tumor was inoperable due to its location. Yet he is so lucky, because he IS ALIVE today.

WHY?

Because of the research and advances in medicine for childhood cancers.

After his treatment began and he started to get better, his oncologist told us, when we brought him in they didn't think he would make it. His chest was so mangled internally, they confided that they thought he would have died from the treatment alone.

But he DIDN'T!

WHY?

Because people like you are generous and continue to support causes such as this one that funds studies, like the one Aidan was on, that continue to advance medicine to keep our children, family, friends, and loved ones ALIVE!

Please give generously to this cause.

You never know who might be struck by cancer and who YOU ARE SAVING!

