

Survivor strives to help

JACOB BROAD PAYS IT FORWARD

Posted By TREVOR TERFLOTH, THE CHATHAM DAILY NEWS

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Because of the support he had during his cancer fight, 11-year-old Jacob Broad wants to pay it forward.

The Grade 6 student at Holy Family School in Wallaceburg was diagnosed two years ago with Burkitt's lymphoma.

Now being in remission, Jacob and his family helped organize the first Jacob's Journey Walkathon, held yesterday at the school.

He was impressed with the more than 300 students he saw taking part.

"It's pretty cool," he said, while taking a break from playing with his friends in the school yard.

"They're very supportive and helping me with practically everything -- I'm pretty thankful."

That support was also evident through a banner featuring hand and footprints from each student.

At last count, more than \$2,000 was raised through yesterday's event. A bake sale and raffle was also held.

The money will go to Childcan, an organization for kids battling cancer, as well as the art therapy program for the children's hospital at the London Health Sciences Centre.

Jacob said while he was curious about his cancer, he always knew he would get through it, as well as the treatment.

Karen Broad, Jacob's mother, said her son coped with his diagnosis remarkably well.

"He was amazing. I think he handled it better than we did," she said. "We're at a point in Jacob's journey where we can give back."

Jacob's father, Steve Broad, couldn't have agreed more.

"There are no words in the English dictionary that say how proud we are of him," he said.

The family hopes to make the walkathon a yearly event.

Marianne Hebb, Childcan executive director, said many local families use the London facility.

"A lot of these kids go through a lot of long-term treatment," she said.

Hebb praised Jacob's resiliency, saying many child cancer survivors are also very intuitive.

"They know other families are struggling," she said.

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