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Lymphoma survivor, 12, gets head shaven by Ong Ye Kung to support children with cancer

Children's Cancer Foundation hopes to raise S\$1.5 million



FB screengrab: Ong Ye Kung

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AUTHOR

Anna Maria Romero

DATE

May 3, 2021

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Singapore—Cancer victims need all the support we can give, and there is a special kind of solidarity among children who have been diagnosed with grave illness.

In a touching show of support, one 12-year-old stepped forward to have his head shaved to stand with other children with cancer, with Transport Minister Ong Ye Kung himself doing the honours as a ceremonial shaver at an event called Hair for Hope held by the Children's Cancer Foundation's (CCF) on Sunday (May 2).

In a Facebook post, Mr Ong wrote that young Terry Goh had been diagnosed with cancer when he was 7.

“HE STEPPED FORWARD TO BE SHAVED – TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR OTHER CHILDREN WHO WERE STRICKEN WITH CANCER.

THEIR JOURNEYS ARE NOT EASY, AND THEIR COURAGE AND RESILIENCE DESERVES OUR SUPPORT.”

The event, CCF's first to be livestreamed, was held at Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery in Upper Thomson.

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The activity is a fundraiser wherein CCF hopes to raise S\$1.5 million through 1,500 shavers.

The organisation, which aims to improve the quality of life of not only children who have cancer but their families as well, thanked Mr Ong over social media for “taking time off your busy schedule to tell children with cancer that it is OK to be bald”.

According to *The New Paper* (TNP), Terry had only been in primary school for three months when he received the news that he had stage 2 Burkitt lymphoma in April 2016.

The illness is a rare but very aggressive type of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, where cancer begins in a person's immune cells.

During this time, which was understandably very difficult both emotionally and financially for Terry's family, they were fortunate to receive support from CCF.

TNP quotes his mother, Mrs Irene Lim, as recalling the time as an emotional “roller coaster.”

CCF's support extended to even visiting Terry's school to talk to his teachers and classmates.

Terry is considered fully recovered and will be taking the PSLE this year.

“I am shaving today to tell other children with cancer it is okay to be bald, especially for those who are scared that they will be laughed at,” he said at the CCF event.

TNP also quoted the Transport Minister, who expressed admiration for the bravery of young cancer warriors.

“I cannot imagine what the children are going through and how they feel. All I can say is they are so brave, and I admire their resilience and courage. We can all do our part – big or small – to show our support for them.”