

Two girls receive more than just a haircut

Angel hair for kids

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Despite her illness, four-year-old Tali Doron would light up when she received visitors in the hospital.

Her friend Li-elle Rapaport, 8, would visit with her sister Noa, 9, and the pair would cheer her up. Tali, who was known as Tali, was diagnosed with a brain tumour last year from a rare and aggressive form of cancer. She died from her illness Aug. 26.

“(Even though) she was sick, she felt very happy,” says Li-elle, who lives with her family in Concord. “Even though she lost all her hair and had to have treatment. Just when people came to visit her made her feel really, really happy.”

The treatment Tali received for her cancer (she had a tumour called an atypical teratoid rhabdoid tumour, or ATRT) caused her to lose her hair. After her death Noa and Li-elle donated their hair to Angel Hair for Kids, a Mississauga-based organization that makes wigs from natural hair for children who have lost theirs due to medical conditions. Noa donated over 13 inches and Li-elle donated 11 inches.

Noa, who had been growing her hair for about two years, plans to grow and donate her locks once again to the same organization.

“It was moving and emotional for me and I was happy I did it,” says Noa, who attends Associated Hebrew Kamin School in Thornhill. “She (Tali) was very brave.”

But the children also decided to raise money along with donating their hair, says their mother, Illana Rapaport.

The pair spoke in front of their peers at school during a lunchtime assembly, Sept. 17, spreading the word of why they were cutting their hair. Ms Rapaport also printed several flyers asking for donations to a fund set up at The Hospital For Sick Children toward research into brain tumours. Her husband Harel helped by distributing the flyers to business associates.

“We did a whirlwind fundraising blitz the week before they (cut their hair),” Ms Rapaport says.

Money began flowing into the fund from parents, friends and colleagues. To date, the fund now stands at more than \$7,000 raised in Tali’s name, says Ms Rapaport.

“I’m extremely proud,” she says, of her daughters, her voice cracking from emotion. “Just for a nine-year-old and an eight-year-old to give their hair is a big deal. They didn’t care how they’d look. They did a very selfless thing.”

Ms Rapaport’s younger daughter Maggi, six, is now growing her hair for the same purpose, she says. Tali’s father, Ori Doron, is amazed how mature Noa and Li-elle acted in donating their hair.

“They are amazing girls,” says Mr. Doron, who also has two sons, Noam, four, and six-year-old Amir. “To do that on their own without anybody telling them to, I’m so proud of them. It’s unbelievable.”

Amir’s school is also raising money for the Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario, a group that helps support children with cancer.

The school organized a run Oct. 10 and 11 to raise money for the organization, with that event dubbed the Run for Tali. They plan to present a check to the group in November.

Mr. Doron is best friends with the girls’ father, Harel, and the two mens’ children were close despite an age difference.

“It’s amazing for girls their age,” said Mr. Doron, who also lives in Concord. “They’re very, very mature and I think they’ve done an amazing service.”

To donate to the fund set up through Sick Kids, visit www.sickkidsfoundation.com Click on the “donate now” icon at the top of the page, then scroll to the link to donate in memory of a patient. Money donated goes toward brain tumour research at Sick Kids.



Li-elle and Noa Rapaport donated lengths of hair to Angel Hair for Kids in honour of their friend Tali Doron, who died this year after battling a rare form of cancer.