

CENTRE FOR CHILDREN'S CANCER AND BLOOD DISORDERS



FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Number 64

December 2003

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Centre for Children's Cancer & Blood Disorders

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



The Christmas holiday period is fast approaching and many of us will be very busy with all the tasks this time brings. Each year as I rush around trying to prepare everything I am reminded of the Christmas Day that my daughter spent in hospital. I think then of those who will be in and out of hospital at this time, of those families of a child newly diagnosed and those who face the Christmas time without a beloved child. I hope that the thoughts and best wishes of other families will provide some comfort.

Thank you to all those families who have sent contributions for the newsletter throughout the year. Without these the newsletter does not happen. Please take time over the holiday period to send in your contribution. Stories, poems, children's contributions and drawings, a useful website, a book which has helped, information about where your child and family are up to now. There will be others who find this valuable.

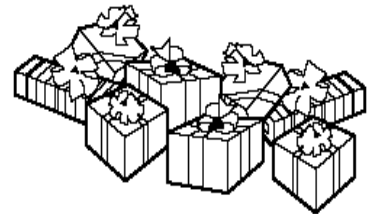
The next Family Newsletter will be out in March 2004.

Until then, take care,

Merry Christmas

Joyeux Noel

Frohe Weihnachten



God Jul

Felice Navidad



Buon Natale

Changed your address recently?

Please make sure the the CCC&BD have your new contact details.

Please phone your specialist's office and give the changed details to the secretary.

Alternately please email Pam Edhouse on edhousep@sesahs.nsw.gov.au



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The Centre for Children's Cancer & Blood Disorders would like to say a big thank you to all our supporters

HERE THERE & EVERYWHERE

What are they up to now?

Madeline was diagnosed with medulloblastoma (cerebellar) in May 2000. Maddie is currently in her second year of kindergarten and is doing extremely well. She loves drawing. Maddie enjoys every bit of life and especially loves gymnastics which has been a big part of her recovery. She also has a **cat named Soxy** and Soxy has been a great companion. Maddie still goes to Sydney for check ups every 4 months.



Matt finished his treatment for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (Stage 111) in 1993. Since that time he has finished one degree (Science with Honours at UNSW), nearly finished the next one (MBA at AGSM), running in the City to Surf and Sutherland to Surf, worked around the world including China, Singapore, Hong Kong, US, UK, Germany and has recently joined the New Business unit at F2 (the Fairfax Online Network) as the web developer.



From **Kate**: "I was diagnosed at age 2 with ALL and have been off treatment since four and a half years of age. At that time I was living near Maitland. Mum and Dad used to take me to Sydney for treatment. I attended Camp Quality for 14 years and always had great companions, lots of fun and made heaps of friends. I am now 24 years old. I have been boarding for some time now with friends and lead a fairly independent life. I have a job as an Admin Assistant at a Preschool. I am in a tenpin bowling league and also do aqua aerobics. If I could get a job in Newcastle I would probably move there because that is where my brother and sister live. I think that it would give me greater independence and the chance to meet more people with similar interests to myself. Best wishes to all the friends I made at Camp Quality Newcastle (hope to see Melissa soon) and a special 'Hello' to Sally (I do not know your married name) who received treatment about the same time I did and then went to the same Camp Quality. Thank you to Prof. Vowels and all the nurses who helped make me better."

News of visitors to the long term follow up clinic

"My name is **Luke** and I started High School this year. I love playing soccer and I want to play for a World Cup team. I like going to the beach and the pool and I like going bike riding through the bush. I have been off treatment for six and a half years now and I am doing really well." Luke was diagnosed at 4 years of age with ALL.

From **Thomas** : "I am in Year 4 at Lindfield Public School. I enjoy playing soccer and cricket. I also like playing with my new PS2 (Playstation 2) especially on these few games - Ratchet and Clank and Crash Bandicoot (Wrath of Cortex). I like visiting my Nana and Grampa. I am very happy and well." Thomas was diagnosed with myelodysplasia at the age of 22 months.)

Emily tells us that she has changed schools and is in Year 5. She enjoys playing netball and indoor soccer and going to camp. She also loves to swim in the new pool. She says that the "Boys like chasing me" (Ed. -I think that this is while she in the pool) and she is enjoying life to the full. Emily was diagnosed with ALL when she was 4 years old.

News from **Spiros** : “My name is Spiros and I am now 29 years of age. I was diagnosed with ALL at the age of 1 year. I am currently doing voluntary work at a school for 20 weeks working as a Teacher’s Aid.”

“My name is **Alex** and I’m 18 years old. I was 3 years old when I was diagnosed with Acute Myeloblastic Leukaemia. I was immediately given treatment of chemotherapy. Lucky for me I cannot remember all of my experience but I do remember the smells of antiseptics and images of my supporting family to this day. I am reminded of how lucky I was to survive such a disease at my age. Now I have finished High School and I work at a Pharmacy. I have just finished my last year as a camper for Camp Quality and this has been a second family to me. I

plan to be a companion so I can help a child who needs some laughter. My goal is to train my voice to become a singer which has been a passion of mine for years. I have also discovered another passion for arts and crafts and have skills in quilting, gift wrapping and silver jewellery making. The reason for me telling families my life and dreams is that there is hope after treatment, cancer, surgery, everything. I am happy, I’m healthy and I thank everyone who has been there for me everyday of my life so far. Never give up on your child or children because they haven’t. I wish all families the best of luck. Always have a positive mind. Keep smiling.”



“My name is **Amanda** and I was diagnosed with ALL when I was three and a half years old. I relapsed when I was 6. I am currently ‘fighting fit’ and enjoying life. I finished Year 12 in 2002 and received a scholarship to TAFE studying a Diploma of Hospitality Management and working at the Sebel resort To all the families that are in the same situation that I was in many years ago I say ‘Just hang in there and definitely don’t give in without a fight!!’ Best wishes.”

Thank You from one of our Families

From **Belinda, mother of Tony**: “I am just writing in appreciation of what Sydney Children’s Hospital has done for my family and its extended members. My son Tony was diagnosed with medullablastoma in August 1998 at the age of 8 1/2 years. He underwent surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy. Tony is now 13 1/2 years old and has 2 brothers, Lang (15 years) and Ryan (10 years). During Tony’s illness I believe that the help and push of his brothers really helped him get through. Tony is currently playing tennis, riding his bike, and for his 13th birthday we gave him a surfboard which in the summer months he enjoys taking to the beach. Recently we climbed a well known mountain in our area called Pigeon House Mountain. It was a really tough climb but we all made it, well almost all of us...I got an attack of vertigo just before the last couple of ladders so stayed holding on to the rocks beneath. Tony enjoys touch football for sport at school and with the help of the endocrine clinic he is growing very well. While Tony was having treatment we stayed at Ronald McDonald House and very much appreciated the help that they have given us. We stay there every 3 months while Tony has his checkups with endocrine, oncology and the MRI department. In March 2000 Tony received a Starlight Wish which was a trip to Queensland to see all the adventure parks. This was such an exciting holiday for the whole family and we would like to thank everyone involved in that also. We have met some very dedicated people during these hard times and couldn’t have got through it without them. Our many thanks to all involved in the Sydney Children’s Hospital. You are doing an excellent job. Thank you.”

Lee writes; "I am now 17 years of age and doing Year 12 at College. I am quite healthy and have been in remission for several years from rhabdomyosarcoma. I was diagnosed when I was 7 years old. When I was diagnosed I thought that it was the end of the world. Well it's not. It was a struggle for a little while but as soon as you are diagnosed it only seems a little while to you being cured. I recommend children with cancer to become involved in Camp Quality. This allows children with cancer to have fun, meet new people and to

overcome their illness by being in a happy state of mind. When I look back on my childhood some of my happiest times were when I was on holidays with Camp Quality. Just remember to hang in there. Things may not be as bad as they seem."

From Cathy (diagnosed at 8 years of age with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma): "I now have my license and I work at Springwood at Industries. I have been there for nearly 6 months and work as a secretary. I feel really good. I

came back to the hospital for a check up on 17 September and found that there were a lot of old faces. It was great."

Rowena says that she was diagnosed with ALL when she was 6 years of age. She still lives on the Northern Beaches of Sydney. Rowena has finished her HSC and is doing well and enjoying a fulfilling life. Her best friend is Julia (Stumpy) and Rowena's hair is bright pink.

Those 2 Days

**There are two days in every week about which we should not worry,
two days which should be kept from fear and apprehension.**

**One of these days is "Yesterday",
with its mistakes and cares,
its faults and blunders, its aches and pains.
Yesterday has passed for ever beyond our control.
All the money in the world cannot bring back yesterday.
We cannot undo a single act we performed.
We cannot erase a single word we said.
Yesterday has gone beyond our recall.**

**The other day we should not worry about is "Tomorrow",
with its possible adversities, its blunders,
its large promise and perhaps its poor performance.
Tomorrow is past our immediate control.
Tomorrow's sun will rise;
until it does we have no stake in tomorrow, for it is yet unborn.**

**This leaves only one day - "Today".
Any man can fight the battle of just one day.
It is only when you and I add the burden of those awful days,
"Yesterday" and "Tomorrow", that we break down.
It is not the experience of today that drives men mad.
It is the remorse or bitterness for what happened yesterday.
the dread of tomorrow and what it might bring.
Let us therefore do our best to live but one day at a time.**

Author unknown.

Adam was diagnosed with ALL in December 2002. He lives in Coffs Harbour but was seen visiting the OPD for the last of his 2 to 3 week visits. He is on maintenance treatment and returned to school the day before his visit to clinic for the first time since diagnosis. He advised that he loves the 'high life'. He likes to fish, catching bream especially, watching movies and going 4 wheel driving with his dad. Over the year of treatment he has had a number of ups and downs but now expects to return to school with full vigor next year when he starts Year 11.



Sam is now 6 years of age and was diagnosed with osteogenic sarcoma on 4th May this year. The tumour was in his left femur. He underwent a few months of chemotherapy and then on 15th August he underwent quite revolutionary surgery where the effected bone was removed and replaced by a prosthetic which will 'grow' as Sam grows. It was designed to expand to the length that tests predicted would have been the ultimate length of this bone had it not been removed. He has a further 4 months of chemotherapy and then ceases treatment. During the early treatment Sam's dad had to under go heart surgery so it was a really tough time all around. Things however have been going much better although Sam had a fall and broke his wrist in early

November trying to do too much. The family have been very impressed by all the staff and say that the nurses, physios, doctors, social workers, school etc have been just fabulous. Sam has 2 **older sisters Emily 11 years and Laura 9 years** who have been fantastic over this very difficult year. The 3 children all went to Camp Quality at Milson Island and loved it. They also went to Fairfield City Farm with Camp Quality and went on a helicopter.

Emma was diagnosed with ALL in December 2002. She has just got the go ahead to return to swimming lessons and to daycare. She will return to daycare in 2004 but has been delighted to return to swimming and, at the time of talking with Emma, she had had 2 lessons and loved them. Emma turned 4 years old in June.



Meaghan started school in March this year but just 2 months later she had shingles and spent 10 days in isolation. While there she got a huge card from her friends at school signed by everyone. She went to Camp Quality at Stanwell Park with all her family, mum, dad, and **brother Ricky**, who is 3 years old. Meaghan has 9 months left of her treatment for ALL. Meaghan has also started violin lessons at Cronulla. She insisted that this should happen and got the interest after listening to a violin

being played by a visitor with Verena.



Tom has just started playing touch football and is loving it. He attends school at Kiama with **brothers Josh and Nick**. All the boys are looking forward to a camping trip to Tasmania in the Christmas holidays and are crossing to Tasmania by ferry. Tom was diagnosed with a chronic blood disorder which was diagnosed 18 months ago.

Please send any contribution for the next newsletter by 15th February 2004

Contributions can be sent to
Family Newsletter
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or call
Merron at home on
9948 8160 or work 9970 1167

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School shouldn't be a bad memory

Children with brain tumours often face more complex difficulties in returning to school than children with other tumours explains Education Consultant Beth Wicks.

Implications for the future education of children with brain tumours

“The child’s return to school is not the end point of rehabilitation. Rather school is an extension of the rehabilitation process begun in hospital...” (Larkin 1992)

Any cancer and its treatment can obviously affect a child’s access to education and academic potential, as a result of both the physical and emotional consequences. However, there is an added complication for children with brain tumours. The existence of the tumour, plus the effects of therapy or surgery can cause an acquired brain injury (ABI). The difficulties these children may subsequently face are, therefore, similar to those encountered after other injuries or illnesses that cause ABI.

Such an injury can provoke special educational needs that may be complex and different from other learning difficulties with which teachers are familiar. There are a number of reasons for this:

Until that time the child’s cognitive and neurological development was, in most cases, normal.

Characteristically, the pattern of difficulties is “patchy”. The child retains previous knowledge and some areas of current skills are preserved but with an overlay of acquired difficulties.

An ABI can affect future neurological and cognitive development (which continues throughout the first two decades of life).

When a child returns to school the physical and medical problems he may face are often recognised and addressed. Learning difficulties as a result of injury, rather than absence from school or anxiety, may not be particularly apparent at that time. Problems in areas such as concentration, organisation or memory skills may well be attributed to those other factors. Any emotional difficulties can be exacerbated by the child’s awareness that he cannot complete academic tasks or engage in social communication in the way he previously. Frequently, the possibility of acquired cognitive problems is never raised with the child, family or school.

Some children, particularly young children, cope well when they initially return to school but encounter problems years later. This is as a result of the fact that the pace and demands of school curriculum increase and damage may have affected areas of the brain controlling particular skills that develop as a child matures.

It is only at the time that this would normally happen that the difficulty becomes obvious.

Unfortunately, the majority of teachers and educational psychologists have no training or information regarding ABI and, therefore, the specific difficulties facing these children are frequently missed or misunderstood. As the child’s previous learning is often intact, his difficulties may be initially masked and are more likely to affect his ability to acquire new learning in the future. Sometimes the problems are superficially subtle, but can have very significant effects on the child’s academic progress and potential and therefore on his self-confidence and self-esteem.

Without appropriate understanding and provision a child’s difficulties can escalate. Ongoing monitoring is vital, even if initial difficulties are not apparent. Appropriate intervention is often simple, but requires understanding as the needs of these children differ from others with learning difficulties. Teachers may say that these children do not require any additional or different assistance because there are many others in the school whose academic performance is less good. The only relevant comparison for these children is their previous and present potential, not with other children.

Education is a crucial part of continuing rehabilitation. Appropriate provision enables maximum curricular access and achievement and helps in rehabilitation of, and compensation for, acquired deficits.

In order that these children’s needs are appropriately met we must ensure that:

families and education personnel have appropriate information there are efficient links between health and education services so that these children’s needs are highlighted there is a partnership with parents when planning provision

Although it may require additional funding, it would be of considerable benefit to those children and others with ABI if appropriate guidelines were produced with recommendations for long term provision and monitoring to include both health and education services.

Beth Wicks

Article reprinted from ICCCPO magazine Vol. 10/No 1 2003

SKI TRIP 2003



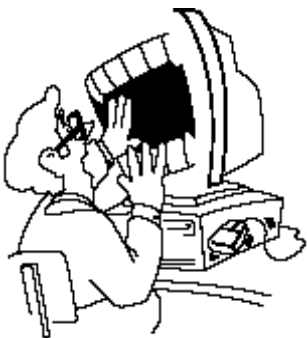
On the 19th September, 22 oncology children from both Sydney Children's Hospital and The Children's Hospital - Westmead, were invited by KidsCan to Thredbo for what was sure to be a jam-packed, fun-filled weekend. Nursing staff (and one very friendly doctor) from both the children's hospitals tagged along to give the volunteers of KidsCan a hand. Oh, and of course, the bus driver from Clipper tours.

Most of the kids claimed that they had never skied before, but after their first lesson on Saturday morning we had speed skiers. The kids were born skiers, not to mention the daredevils of the group (Daimen, Jack, April, Drew and Brett). Saturday afternoon saw a few of the older kids (with staff in tow, of course) attempting to attack Merritts. No injuries, just lots of tumbles and loads of fun. Saturday night was party, party, party and we all had a great time. We played trivia and wrap the mummy amongst other games, with loads of cool prizes.



Sunday morning - Hit the ski fields bright and early - NOT!! For the first time in years of running the trip we had rain. So we changed our plan and headed into Jindabine where the kids met and spoke with Michael- Para-Olympic skiing champion, who holds 10 Olympic medals including 6 gold. He was very inspiring. The kids had some hairy questions for him - as kids do. They wanted to know what it was like for Michael going through cancer treatment as a child all those years ago and what it was like for him to ski with one leg.

Once the kids were fed we headed off to Quest-a-con in Canberra. The rain was not going to stop us having a great weekend!! WOW! What fun - the kids had a great time playing with all the gadgets - this was a great alternative to not skiing. Once they finished here we headed back to Sydney. By now the kids (and staff) were all worn out. We have some great memories.



Thanks to all the kids for the making of a great trip without any major dramas.

A special thanks to the nurses and our token doctor for giving up their own time to lend a hand, and a BIG thank you to Mike and Ant from KidsCan who worked hard to get the show on the road. Denman Mountain Inn, Arnotts, RAMs (those slippers!!) McDonald's at Sutton Forrest and Clipper tours to name a few were all good sports for coming to the party.

Lets hope for no rain next year! Ida O'Brien

FROM THE CENTRE FOR CHILDREN'S CANCER AND BLOOD DISORDERS

News from C4North The Day Unit

The last few months have been very busy on C2N. First there were the "Christmas in July" celebrations, where your day unit nursing, clerical and medical staff dressed as the "Herald Angels". We won 2nd prize for the effort! Then, on International Children's Day the entire hospital celebrated with "Party Day". Our theme was all things Hawaiian, with staff wearing loud shirts, tropical fruit to eat throughout the day and hula music playing. There were some special visitors and a barbecue lunch for the patients on the day.

The unit is now the proud owner of a specialized apheresis chair. This chair is ideal for our patients' comfort during the restrictions of apheresis procedures. It plugs into mains power and has 2 controls, one for the patient to alter the back and foot rests and a second for the nurse to control the height.

From your Day Unit, C2North.

C2W (Turnbull Ward)

During the past few months the ward has been quite busy. We have been fortunate to have some special visitors to the ward, which have included Shannon from Australian Idol, Ian Thorpe, and the Scottish Rugby players from the World Cup.

Recently we have had new arrivals to the staff of C2W. They are Jen from the USA, Natalie from England, Heather who has returned to us from Recovery, Annette who has come back to C2W and Megan. I would specially like to welcome Poppy back to C2W. Poppy has returned to the Casual Pool of SCH but is spending a lot of time with us on the ward. We also welcome Jacinta, Karen and Allsya who are nurses on the new graduate program. We hope that they find their time on the unit beneficial and enjoyable in their nursing career. We are also expecting more staff to start from overseas at the end of this year and in the early new year. Sarah, Melissa and Luke have left C2W to pursue other things. We wish them all the best and good luck to you all in your future nursing career.

I am pleased to announce that Tracie, who went on maternity leave in April had a beautiful baby boy, Joel, born in May. She will be returning to C2W in 2004.

Recently C2W had a Lawn Bowls Day with the winning team of John, Rowena, Sarah and Nicky combining beautifully, displaying style and class. Word is that they are seeking selection to the Australian Team to the 2004 Olympics.

As you all know Christmas is fast approaching and C2W will be having the children's party on 19th December with Santa making a special visit.

From all the staff of C2W we hope that you are well and send our best wishes.

Centre for Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders Consumer Advisory Group

The formation of a Consumer Advisory Group, where parents and previous patients can inform and guide the Management group of the CCC&BD, has been a vision of the CCC&BD Executive over the past few years. In 2003, the CCC&BD Consumer Advisory Group was formed and the inaugural meeting was held in March this year. The group has met on 5 occasions since, as the Terms of Reference have been finalised and the group established. It is planned that in 2004 the group will meet every 3 months from February or March.

The members of the group have been able to provide feedback and information to the CCC&BD on matters such as the interactions between the CCC&BD and related external organisations such as the Children's Cancer Institute Australia (CCIA) and the Malcolm Sargent Cancer Fund (MSCF). As well, the group has provided excellent feedback on activities such as the Kids Cancer Update, the CCC&BD website, (www.kids-cancer.org), the Family Newsletter and hospital plans including the redevelopment plans for C2N. Discussions on many of these issues and others will continue in 2004.

If you are interested in participating in this group, there is still room for another 1 or 2 members, so please contact Jayne Murdoch, Nurse Manager, CCC&BD on 9382 1692.

BEREAVEMENT AND RELATED ISSUES

New Bereavement Counsellor

I would like to introduce myself to the readers of the 'Family Newsletter'. My name is Kerry Nair and I am the new Bereavement Counsellor based within the Centre for Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders. Some of you may have met Sue Higgins who worked in this role up until July.

The role of the Bereavement Counsellor is to provide emotional and practical support and counselling to palliative children and families within CCC&BD and to those families whose children have died. This invitation is open to those families no matter how long the time period has been since this has happened. Grief and loss is a very individual thing. Some families may want to begin once their child has been diagnosed and others feel that they are ready to talk months or years later.

Even though I may meet some families here at Sydney Children's Hospital the majority of my work is to reach out to those families once they have returned home. This can be done on the phone, by using Telehealth centres, by email and home visits. I also plan to facilitate parent support groups and help organize yearly events for families such as a bereavement seminar. I have inherited a library of information that may be useful to families, about other support services that may be in your area and useful literature for you or your children to read.

My experience is in Community Bereavement Counselling in the National Health Service in the UK both in city and rural settings. I have had extensive experience also of working with children, young people and families in the drug and alcohol field.

I am quite new to Australia, New South Wales and Sydney. I am looking forward to seeing some more of your state as I travel to see families. If any of the readers of the Family Newsletter would like to get in touch with me my phone number is 02 9382 1726 or 9382 1721 and my email address is nairk@sesahs.nsw.gov.au

Kerry Nair.

Strength

In the early days of my grief, a tear would well up in my eyes, a lump would form in my throat, but you would not know - I would hide it. I was strong.

In the middle days of my grief, I would see that wall that I had attempted to go around as an every present reminder of a wall still to be scaled. Yet I did not attempt to scale it for the strong will survive - and I am strong.

In the later days of my grief I learned to climb over that wall - step by step - remembering, crying, grieving. And the tears flowed steadily as I painstakingly went over. The way was long, but I did make it. I am strong.

Near the resolution of my grief, a tear will well up in my eyes, a lump will form in my throat, but I will let that tear fall and you will see it. Through it you will see that I still hurt and I care. For I am strong.

Terry Jago, Canada. Taken from The Compassionate Friends Brisbane Newsletter

Remembrance Ceremony

The Remembrance Ceremony was held on Sunday, September 21st this year. It was our 4th Remembrance. The Remembrance is held every 2 years and was first held in 1997.

The Remembrance Ceremony is the Centre for Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders way of publicly and formally acknowledging the lives of the children we have cared for who have died - it is also a way of formally acknowledging their families grief.

During the morning several people spoke - parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, clergy and staff. Thoughts, poems, tributes and songs were shared. Tears, laughter and hugs were also shared.

As the unit treats and cares for children from all over NSW and the ACT and has been doing so since 1964, there were families from different and distant places, as well as those from nearby. Families whose children died 25 years ago were present as well as those whose child died recently.

The Remembrance Candle was lit - the lighting of this candle symbolizes the uniting of everyone present.

On the day family members were given the opportunity to create an ongoing memory of their child who had been associated with the unit. Families could bring a photo or decorate a page or write their thoughts on a page to be placed in the Remembrance Book. The Remembrance Book is kept safely in the Unit and is only seen by families who attend the Remembrance Ceremony.

When the Remembrance concluded families were given a smaller version of the Remembrance Candle and a single white rose to take home with them.

Sr. Donna Drew

Condolences



Our sincere sympathy goes to the families of those children who have died over recent months.

**Amariah
Paul
Jake
Hudson
Jessica**

Our thoughts are with you at this very difficult time.

GENERAL NEWS AND INFORMATION

Sanskrit Proverb

Look to this day, for it is life. The very life of life.
In its brief course lie all the realities
and verities of existence.
The bliss of growth. The splendor of action.
The glory of power.
For yesterday is but a dream, and tomorrow is only a vision.
But today well lived,
makes every yesterday a dream of happiness.
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well therefore to this day.

Cancer

Cancer may rob you of that blissful ignorance
that once led you to believe that tomorrow stretched forever.
In exchange, you are granted the vision to see each day as a
precious gift,
to be used wisely and richly. No one can take that away.

Staff of the
CCC&BD extend
their best wishes to
all families for a
peaceful and safe
Christmas and New
Year.



Bereaved Parents Group



There has been general consensus from regular attendees of this group to move the location from Sacred heart Hospice, Darlinghurst to another location, probably in the Randwick/Kingsford area (not the hospital).

This decision has been made for a number of reasons;

- Parking is difficult in that area
- Some people did not feel safe returning to their cars in the evening
- The hospice setting did not feel appropriate

Those attendees of the group feel strongly that they would like the group to be accessible to other appropriate families.

A few locations (some with car parks) have been offered to the group and I am looking into these. In the meantime we have agreed to meet once more before Christmas on the evening of Wednesday 17th December at 7.30pm at Sacred Heart Hospice. At the meeting, alongside the issue of Christmas for families, we can make dates for next year and a final decision on the new location. I hope to see you all then. If anybody has any comments and cannot be with us on the 17th please contact me on 02 9382 1726. I wish you a peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Kerry Nair. Bereavement Counsellor