

Cancer survivor loses his hair again – for a good cause

Thirteen-year-old Jarenn Foo having his hair shaved by his father Zaric as part of the Hair for Hope event at the Jean Yip Salon yesterday. Behind them is his sister Marylyn, 12.

Jarenn first had his hair shaved because of cancer before undergoing chemotherapy. He was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in August 2009. ST PHOTO: ASHLEIGH SIM



■ BY NEO WEN TONG

IT WAS the second time he shaved off his hair because of cancer.

Jarenn Foo, 13, first did so before undergoing chemotherapy, after being diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in August 2009.

Yesterday, the survivor shed his thick locks again, but this time in support of his friends who are still battling cancer.

His efforts kicked off the first satellite event for Hair for Hope (HfH). Jarenn has raised about \$4,500 through HfH so far.

Into its ninth year, HfH is an annual head-shaving event organised by the Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF), aimed at raising funds for CCF and awareness of childhood cancer.

Jarenn's father, Mr Zaric Foo, 46, also went bald yesterday in support of the movement. Both father and son were taking part in HfH for the first time.

Mr Foo, Jarenn's full-time caregiver, recalled the emotional roller-coaster ride

when his son was diagnosed with cancer. In one especially heart-rending moment, Jarenn asked him: "Pa, do I have cancer? Am I going to die?"

A major setback came in June last year when Jarenn almost died of a lung infection, said Mr Foo.

In September that same year, a blood infection caused by bacteria from a skin graft ate away a large chunk of flesh on his leg, leaving Jarenn wheelchair-bound.

"But I hope he recovers soon and will be able to walk again. He has been very brave and never questioned again why he's in this condition," said Mr Foo.

Reflecting on his battle with cancer, Jarenn said: "Don't ask why you have cancer, because you will never have an answer. Play hard. Eat well. Sleep well. Live life as normally as possible."

CCF, through HfH, hopes to attract at least 3,000 participants and raise \$1.8 million this year.

The main event will be held on July 23 and 24 at VivoCity. Visit www.hairforhope.org.sg/ for more information.

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