Singapore

Hair for Hope 2017 expects to attract 2,500 participants

Prior to the main event that kicked off on Saturday (Jul 29), more than 2,500 people already shaved their heads at satellite events in support of children with cancer, organisers said.

Minister for Social and Family Development Tan Chuan-Jin and Children's Cancer Foundation beneficiary Low Wen Pei. (Photo: Children's Cancer Foundation)

SINGAPORE: The Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF)'s annual community outreach and fundraising event Hair for Hope returned for its 15th run on Saturday (Jul 29).

The two-day event at VivoCity expects to attract more than 2,500 participants to shave their heads in support for children with cancer, organisers CCF said in a press release.

Before the main event, 2,563 people already shaved their heads at 48 satellite events - at offices, schools, grassroots organisations and places of worship - from April to July, they added.

"Hair for Hope was initiated 15 years ago by a group of nine volunteers who decided to shave to tell children that it is OK to be bald. Since then, the annual outreach event has been strongly supported by volunteers from all walks of life, ranging from volunteer hairstylists to photographers and event helpers," the organisers said.

As part of the opening event, Minister for Social and Family Development Tan Chuan-Jin and five other representatives - CCF patron Ho Peng Kee, CCF executive director Neo Lay Tin, head of investment and asset management at VivoCity Koh Wee Leong, QB House senior manager Mikami Keigo and caregiver Koh Peng Eng - shaved the heads of six ceremonial participants.

One of them was CCF beneficiary and first-time Hair for Hope participant Wen Pei, who was diagnosed with Stage 2 Burkitt's lymphoma in 2013.

The 14-year-old cancer survivor battled the illness for almost half a year, according to the CCF.

"Having personally experienced the lows of being ostracised by her friends due to her hair-loss during chemotherapy treatment, Wen Pei seeks to erase the social stigma of baldness," it said in the

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press release.

Minister for Social and Family Development Tan Chuan-Jin shaving the head of 14-year-old cancer survivor Wen Pei at the Hair for Hope 2017 opening event. (Photo: Children's Cancer Foundation)

Another of the ceremonial participants, local film producer Daniel Yun, also shaved his head in support for the event for the first time.

The 59-year-old is one of the top five in terms of funds raised for the event, having raised S$24,400 for CCF so far, it said.

Mr Yun witnessed a friend having her head shaved at the event last year and was "greatly inspired" by her courage, it added.

CCF executive director Neo Lay Tin shaving the head of veteran filmmaker Daniel Yun on stage. (Photo: Children's Cancer Foundation)

CCF chairperson Ho Cheng Huat said that when participants make a "bald" statement by shaving their heads, they become ambassadors in raising childhood cancer awareness among their family and friends.

Mr Tan, who was guest-of-honour, also said that every shaven head "represents an individual's understanding of the ordeals that a child with cancer has to journey through".

"It is a proclamation that it is okay to be bald and that the children are not alone in their fight against cancer," he added.

Source: CNA/mz

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