

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Not Defined by Cancer: Deca's Story of Resilience and Purpose

24-year-old aspiring meteorologist champions resilience, community, and giving back as he joins healthcare professionals in a panel discussion on life beyond cancer.

Singapore, 5 June 2026 – When asked about his childhood cancer journey, Deca speaks openly about the challenges he faced and the resilience he developed along the way. He recalls the exact date he was first warded, when he had his first biopsy, and the dates of each of his three major surgeries. Despite that, he shared that he lost an entire week of memories following one of those operations. Yet those milestones remain vivid. “*May 24th*”, he recounts, as the biggest surgery he has had.

Not because they represent what cancer took away, but because they remind him of how far he has come.



16-year-old Deca with his father before a 14-hour surgery.

Diagnosed with a Central Nervous System (CNS) tumour less than six months before his O-Level examinations, Deca has spent much of the last decade learning how to navigate challenges that most people his age have never had to think about. Through treatment, recovery, and two potential regressions in 2021 and 2025, he has developed a perspective that continues to shape the way he approaches life today.

Rather than dwelling on limitations, he focuses on possibilities.

"We are all leaders of our own lives," he shares. "You can't always choose what happens to you, but you can choose how you respond to it."

That mindset has transformed the way he views both his health and his future.

Today, he regularly pushes himself to go further than he thought possible, triumphing walks up to 30km, when even a 2km walk was a challenge post-treatment and celebrating every milestone along the way. The journey has also taught him to appreciate his body differently.

"I've learned to focus on what my body can do, rather than what it can't," he shared. "When you start recognising the small improvements and victories, you realise how much progress you've made."

The same determination that helped him navigate cancer has fuelled his ambitions beyond it.



Deca present day.

An aspiring meteorologist with a passion for the environment and nature, Deca is currently awaiting his internship for urban planning to start and works towards embracing opportunities for growth. He is actively involved in volunteering, supporting both childhood cancer initiatives and environmental causes that are close to his heart.

A Community of Care

Over the years, Deca shares that Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF) has been a source of encouragement, community, and support throughout his cancer journey. Through programmes, events, and connections with fellow survivors and families, he found a network of people who understood the challenges he faced and celebrated the milestones alongside him.

Deca recalls that CCF PALS Programme returned a sense of purpose for him during his recovery. After learning that he would not be able to sit for his O-Level examinations, PALS gave him something meaningful to focus on and look forward to. More importantly, it helped him maintain a sense of normalcy during the challenging periods. Following surgery, he gradually re-engaged with his studies, which played a key role in rebuilding his confidence and improving his memory.

"School gave me something to do besides thinking about my illness," he shared. "It helped me adjust back to everyday life and reminded me that there was still a future to work towards."

Emphasising on the importance of community, Deca also shares fond memories of an overseas learning programme, CCF's Youth Success Learning Programme (YSLP), held in Brunei in 2024, where he had the opportunity to connect with fellow childhood cancer survivors from different backgrounds and countries.



22-year-old Deca and other youth survivors participating in CCF's overseas learning programme held in Brunei in 2024.

The experience left a lasting impression on him, and he remains friends with many of the participants today. While each survivor's journey was unique, they shared a common understanding of the challenges and experiences that came with childhood cancer.

"It was a very special experience," he reflected. "We all had similar stories in some ways, but our journeys were also very different. There was a strong sense of connection and understanding that brought us together."

For Deca, having a community of peers who could relate to his experiences provided a sense of belonging and support. The friendships and bonds formed through the programme continue to remind him that no one has to navigate the cancer journey alone.

Becoming a Voice for Others

Today, he hopes to do the same for others.

Looking ahead, Deca envisions himself becoming a peer motivator and mentor, supporting younger patients and survivors as they navigate their own journeys. On CCF Childhood Cancer Survivors' Day 2026 which will be held on 6 June, Deca will also be participating as one of the panellists for the panel discussion titled "Caring for Health After Treatment", which brings together healthcare professionals and Deca representing CCF as a childhood cancer survivor, to share what continued care truly looks like.

"I want them to know that their diagnosis doesn't define them," he said. "There will be challenges, but there are also dreams to pursue, goals to achieve, and so much to look forward to."

His brush with childhood cancer is only a chapter in a much bigger story. Today, that story is one of resilience, purpose, and the belief that life's greatest possibilities often lie beyond the challenges we face.

About Children's Cancer Foundation

Founded in 1992, the Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF) is a Social Service Agency dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for children with cancer and their families. With a mission to improve emotional, social, and medical well-being, CCF is committed to becoming a leading provider of resources and psychosocial services for those impacted by childhood cancer. For more information, visit www.ccf.org.sg.

About Childhood Cancer Survivors' Day 2026

More than 200 childhood cancer survivors, families, healthcare professionals, community partners and volunteers will be gathering at Resorts World Sentosa for CCF's Childhood Cancer Survivors' Day (CCSD) 2026, celebrating a milestone that once felt uncertain for many families: life beyond cancer. Themed "**Being, Belonging, Becoming**", this year's event celebrates survivorship as an ongoing journey of growth, identity, and community support.

The event marks a significant milestone as it's the first time, CCSD brings together community partners from the medical teams, and childhood cancer in a collective effort to spotlight survivorship and quality of life beyond treatment. The event will be attended by CCF Patron, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Law & Ministry of Social and Family Development, Mr Eric Chua.

The event is made possible through the support of long-time partner **BHP Billiton Marketing Asia Pte Ltd**, which has supported CCF since 2014 through donations, volunteering efforts and community engagement initiatives.

"BHP is honoured to continue our support for Childhood Cancer Survivors' Day. Over the years, we have seen firsthand the extraordinary resilience of survivors and the strength of the community that stands with them. Survivorship extends well beyond recovery, and we are proud to stand alongside the Children's Cancer Foundation and help create opportunities for survivors and their loved ones to connect, learn and build fulfilling lives beyond cancer." – Mr Willem Strauss, Head of Digital Trust, BHP

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