



Finn's Fighters
Progress Report
May 2019-May 2023

2023

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FINN'S FIGHTERS

Increasing awareness of pediatric cancer while supporting families faced with a pediatric cancer diagnosis in the Tampa Bay area.

Finn was your average fun-loving 5-year-old. He loved music, dancing, roughhousing with his 6-year-old brother Declan and all things Lego. It was a random day that he said his back was hurting a little. The pediatrician suggested Motrin and to call back in a few days if it didn't feel better.

Fast forward a month and still hurting, only now he could barely sit in a car seat without wincing in pain. It was the first day of Kindergarten. By Wednesday morning he could barely walk, so to the ER we went. Finn was admitted and given an MRI Thursday morning which showed a tumor on his spine and he was rushed into emergency surgery. We were given a diagnosis of Ewings Sarcoma. Surgery was 9 hours, waiting for diagnosis another 10. We suddenly were facing the worst fear any parent has: the mortality of their child. Odds of 5 year survival on initial diagnosis of localized disease 80%.

Over the next year, Finn endured 8 surgeries, chemotherapy infusions, blood transfusions, platelet transfusions and hospital stays. He had to learn to walk again, missed his kindergarten year and precious family time with his best bud Declan. By May 2019 he rang the bell of end of treatment.

The summer brought fun in the sun, family time, beach trips and his Dream trip to Disney through Children's Dream Fund organization.

August marked the start of first grade. By week 2 of school Finn had his first 3 month follow up MRI where we were devastated to find out there was a new mass in a new location on his spine. Relapse. Odds of 5 year survival at relapse 30%.

We cannot be more grateful for the amazing team at St. Joseph Children's Hospital. The amazing care they have shown Finn and our family has been unbelievable; at times we felt like the only patient in the hospital. While this is certainly the journey no child should have to endure, yet he did it with grace, determination and that "ya sure" attitude along the way.

Sadly after several failed chemotherapy protocols, radiation and a trip to Boston for a specialized trial Finn passed away January 21, 2020 peacefully surrounded by family and his beloved Barkey, 30 days after relapse.

Today, we continue to #FightWithFinn to bring financial assistance and specialized experiences to the families of Tampa Bay while advocating for pediatric cancer awareness and increasing our focus on mental health care.

Today we ask, will you #FightWithFinn?

FROM OUR CHIEF MOMCOLOGOIST

Meet Christen, who believes the success of Finn's Fighters is a reflection of the passion they have for helping families in need and the continued support of the Tampa Bay community.

When Finn was diagnosed, our family was your typical dual income household with 2 children in elementary school balancing jobs, homework and weekend play dates. Finn's treatment required hospital stays every other week, often with fever induced hospital stays in between. In order to have a parent with him at all times I had to quit my job. While our income drastically reduced, our bills were skyrocketing. If it weren't for our amazing group of family and friends we never would have gotten through it. We were extremely blessed that we could make that decision, however during hospital stays we saw many kids alone because family had to work, they had no other choice. It was truly heartbreaking

It was during one of those hospital stays that Finn's Fighters was born. After thoughtful consideration to Finn's privacy, it was his decision to say "ya sure" and name the organization.



Through the unimaginable, our family is dedicated to support others the way our community supported us.

FINN'S FOUNDATION

Finn's Fighters began in May of 2019, with our first donation as an official 501c3 to St. Joseph's Hospitals Foundation Christmas in July.

Christen, Declan and Finn brought donations of toys and gift cards to celebrate the end of his treatment. Later that year they adopted a family that was struggling because they no longer had services available as an off treatment family. While they celebrated survivorship, they were financially bankrupt.

01

Finn's Funds

Our Grant program is meant to assist families with short term financial assistance based on need. We have paid rents, mortgages, car payments, utility bills, travel expense, funerals and more. We have also partnered with a family who owns a beach condo to send families on a respite getaway to relax and enjoy some fun in the sun. Sadly, we have also paid for funeral expenses for multiple families.

02

Advocacy and Education

It surprises many that after accidents, cancer is the second leading cause of death in children ages 1 to 14 and the number one cause of death by disease. About 1,040 children under the age of 15 are expected to die from cancer in 2023. Along with taking any opportunity to speak on pediatric cancer awareness, Christen travels to DC each September to Curefest and also speaks during Action Days requesting more funding each year.

03

Partner Support

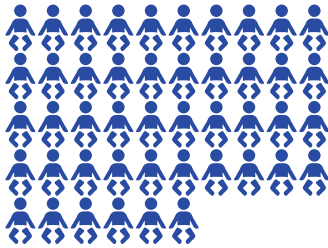
Finn's Fighters proudly supports through volunteerism and sponsorship with Savvy Giving by Design and Angling for Relief, two local organizations that support children facing pediatric cancer in Tampa Bay.

STATISTICS OF COMMUNITY

The pediatric cancer community has been historically underserved by the government and often requires families like the Gray's to fight for services as well as increased funding. For example, Only about 4% of all federal funding for cancer research is spent on projects involving children's cancers.

46

number of children diagnosed daily



1/5

1 in 5 children will not survive a pediatric cancer diagnosis



70

70 average years lost to pediatric cancer



14

14 years average lost to adult cancer



80%

Number of marriages that end in divorce when dealing with longterm chronic illness or death of a child

MEASURING PROGRESS

Measuring progress can often mean more than numbers. While we certainly have seen an amazing level of growth in donations, sponsorship and outgoing grants, we have also been fortunate to see our supporting community grow. From features on news stories and podcasts to selection as a chosen charity for Tampa Connection, Finn's Fighters has seen exponential organic growth within our community.

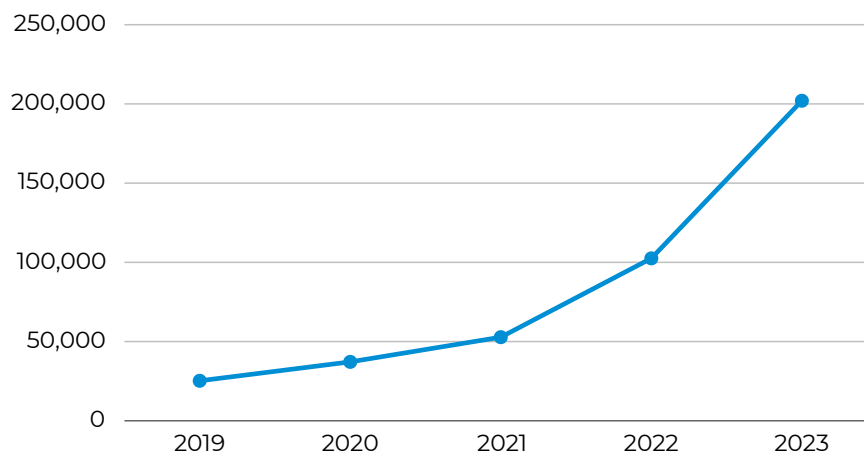
Key Indicator	Activity / Project	Data / Outcome
Revenue Growth	While seeing continued growth in our annual Dream Big Gala, 5k and #PJAAllDay fundraisers we have also created a Hawaiiin Holiday Soiree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional \$30k in donations • New Gala Attendees and ongoing donors • focus on grant writing
Promotion	Selected as a charity of choice from Tampa Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of new legal and marketing materials • Creation of Golf Tournament guide • Creation of FINNspirations bereaved family guide
Reduction of Expenses	Brought on dedicated book keeper, made the leap to become full time executive director	working on cost reduction through proper budgeting and cost controls

Financial Update

Reporting performance can include details such as indicators identified, data collected and SDG-related activities accomplished. Clear and concrete performance goals make it easier to generate relevant, consistent and comparable data over time, in formats that your audience can understand and appreciate.

Donations through the Years

Donations through private funders, Facebook, online donations and events



2023 Financial Goals Focus

- Reduction of monthly expenses through financial review by book keeper
 - Switch to non profit Canva
 - reduce donor software expense
 - utilize volunteers for a reduction of event expense
- Increase in grant writing
- Utilization of college interns for marketing

1 in 5

1 in 5 children who receive a new diagnosis of childhood cancer are already living in poverty

NEXT STEPS

Finn's Fighters has the potential to provide supports to hundreds of families in Tampa Bay that continue to need our help.

With your support, Finn's Fighters could step into the next level of support to families in our community. We can continue to advocate on their behalf, provide financial support and educate the masses on the symptoms to avoid late diagnosis which could be the difference between life and death for some.

“You want to be the pebble in the pond that creates the ripple for change.”

Tim Cook

01

Grant Writing for Operational Costs

We are committed to find a partner organization or grant to cover organizational costs to support a salary for Executive Director and administrative assistant. Cost could equate to \$40k to 60K.

02

Friends of Finn

New program that would provide a \$500 Finn's Fighter Gift Card along with a list of community resources to help. With 66 new diagnoses alone at St. Joseph in 2022, this equates to a minimum of \$33,000.

03

FINNspirations

Working to send bereaved families on a respite trip with a message of hope as they transition into a new phase of life without their loved one. Cost could equate to \$2,500 to \$5,000 per trip.

CONCLUSION

While Finn's Fighters remains focused on the grant program in which it started, we have renewed excitement at the potential to grow and serve in more ways.



Mental Health Support

Partner with St. Joe's Foundation

- 3 year commitment co-funding mental health professional for HEM/ONC
 - \$112,500 commitment
- As of 12/2023 providing services to 61 individuals and growing.

FINNspirations

Support for Bereaved Families

- Bringing messages of hope for bereaved families
- Individualized family outing
- Provide continued support group for bereaved families



Finn's Funds

Grow Grant Making program

- Continue fundraising to support
- Streamline process
- Educate families on services available outside of Finn's Fighters
- Connect families with other organizations and opportunities

Finn's Fighters needs your help now.

I would like to thank our founding and current board members, without whom our family could not have gotten through this journey and the growth of our organization could never have happened.



Special thanks to our hardworking Board of Directors:

- *Salima Dhanji, Senior VP, Legal, Citibank*
- *Dr. Erin Cockrell, Director Hematology St. Joseph's Children's Hospital*
- *Katrina Lynch, Business Administration*
- *Cara Myers, Accounting*
- *James Gray, Director of Operations*
- *Melissa Leonard, Fraud Operations Analyst*

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WITH THANKS

From our family to yours, thank you for allowing us the opportunity to share our story and mission.

~ Jim, Christen, Declan and Finn

