

Braden’s Story

Once upon a not-so-long time ago, in a kingdom not so far away, there lived a brave knight named Braden. Braden was one of the most determined and courageous knights in the kingdom, as he had faced numerous health and development challenges during his first 3 years resulting in many visits to Children’s Mercy Hospital and its clinics.

On December 28, at 3 years 3 months of age, he would encounter his most mighty foe, a monster named cancer. After tests, doctors told Braden’s family that he had a rare form of cancer called neuroblastoma. His was stage 4 and high risk, which resulted in only about a 30% chance of survival. Braden was sent to a section of the kingdom called 4 Henson. On this floor, they met the equally determined Dr. Richard Shore and his team of merry gentlewomen, Nancy and Becky.

Braden began chemotherapy treatments to try to control this monstrous tumor that had also invaded his bone marrow and right hip. The hope was that five cycles of high-dose chemotherapy would shrink the tumor enough that it could be removed with surgery, and then additional therapies would be needed to eliminate all remaining cancer from his body. Braden was told that his battle would last about a year and be challenging at every step.

Braden found a strong support system in this kingdom to help him do battle with this cancer. Friends from around the world were hoping and praying for a victory. Those people became known as Braden’s Army. Some of his most heralded warriors were the nurses and care assistants in the Hem/Onc clinic and on 4 Henson. They were comforting, calming, and caring while helping him fight this vicious enemy. Along the way, Braden met a beautiful princess whom he adored. Her name was Jamie and she met Braden at the clinic with a smile and an innate sense of understanding. Braden also drew great strength from fellow brave knights fighting their personal battles with their own cancer monsters. Their strength inspired Braden and his family to continue to battle even during the darkest of days. And with the help of them all, Braden was successful in his first battle with the monster and was able to have his tumor removed successfully by Dr. Ronald Sharp.

The monster does not give up easily. Neither does Brave Knight Braden. The next battle Braden faces is a bone marrow transplant, which is where the story continues today. Braden has fought hard and will continue to do so to win the many battles ahead of him. Braden’s story is one of hope, faith, and great love. And that is how the next chapter in Braden’s story begins, with hope! The kingdom of mighty warriors at Children’s Mercy Hospital, Braden’s Army, Braden’s own great bravery and strength, and continual faith and love provide that hope – the hope that this story will end with “And he lived happily ever after for a very, very long time!” The Beginning.

Deliece Hofen – Olathe, Kansas



Braden



The Hofens—Brian, Zachary, Deliece and Braden



The Brave Knight