



Mount Douglas Secondary School

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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'KAPS FOR KIERA'

Fundraiser for BC Children's Hospital and Ronald McDonald House in Kiera O'Connor's Name

Kiera O'Connor, a 16-year-old student at Mount Douglas Secondary School, and former student at Gordon Head Middle School, was diagnosed in late June with Nodular Lymphocyte-Predominant Hodgkin Lymphoma (NLPH). NLPH is an uncommon type of Hodgkin lymphoma – a type of cancer that starts in the lymphatic system. Lymphomas develop when white blood cells called "lymphocytes" become abnormal. The lymphocytes start to grow out of control. They collect in large numbers in lymph nodes and make them swell (enlarge). About 1 in 20 Hodgkin lymphomas diagnosed (5%) are NLPH. The two main groups that are stricken by NLPH are children and people in their 30s and 40s. Three of four cases diagnosed are in males. It is more common in children under 10 than in 10–18 year olds.

Since mid-July, Kiera has been travelling back and forth to the BC Children's Hospital in Greater Vancouver to undergo a grueling chemotherapy treatment regime (while still attending a full semester of classes at Mount Douglas). Kiera and her family have been incredibly positive and resilient, and credit the BC Children's Hospital and Ronald McDonald House for the extraordinary support offered to the family during Kiera's Vancouver stays. As a school community, we send our love and positive thoughts to Kiera and her family, and next week plan, in a collective action of support with Gordon Head Middle School, to hold 'Kaps for Kiera' to raise funds in Kiera's name for the BC Children's Hospital and Ronald McDonald House.

Two events are planned at Mount Douglas Secondary School. On Wednesday, October 19th, students and staff will wear 'kaps/hats/torques' in support of Kiera, and during period 2 class, a 'kap' will be passed around the classroom for donations. Any offering will help, so we are encouraging donations of any size. A second effort to take donations will be in the Mount Douglas Secondary School front foyer during Parent-Teacher interviews on Thursday, October 20th. Donations can also be made through the 'GoFundMe' link above for Kiera. Monies received on-line will put donors in a draw for a 2016 US Open Golf Tournament flag signed by winner Dustin Johnson, or a \$1000 home alarm system from Beacon Security Systems.

It is Kiera's wish that the total monies raised by Mount Douglas Secondary and Gordon Head Middle School next week be split 50/50 between the BC Children's Hospital and Ronald McDonald House.

Our intent is to both raise awareness of Nodular Lymphocyte-Predominant Hodgkin Lymphoma and to support an incredibly brave, young lady in her battle to beat cancer. Please give generously if you can. If you would like more information about the 'Kaps for Kiera' campaign, please contact Lisa Hebb at Mount Douglas Secondary School.