

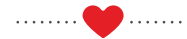
2024 Maison Enfant Soleil signée Bonneville Ambassador



Charles-Édouard Demers, 12 years old

Suffering from optic nerve glioma (benign brain tumor) that requires chemotherapy

“I feel more combative than before. After everything I’ve been through in the last year, I feel like nothing can bring me down!”



On December 21, 2021, Charles-Édouard and his parents, Isabelle and Hugo, head to the CHUL to obtain the results of an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) performed a few days earlier. This was following an investigation into Charles-Édouard's precocious puberty. His heart set on the upcoming holiday break, Charles-Édouard had no idea that this simple visit to the hospital would mark the beginning of a life-changing chapter in his life.

At a time when pandemic limitations are still in effect, only one parent can accompany Charles-Édouard to his first appointments. Isabelle is at his side, and Hugo must wait for them in their vehicle.

Charles-Édouard and his mother are called in to see an endocrinologist, a gland and hormone specialist, who delivers the diagnosis: Charles-Édouard has a benign but active brain tumor. This tumor, which tends to put pressure on the optic chiasm where the two optic nerves cross, may cause him to lose his sight irreversibly. It also puts pressure on the hypothalamus, which, among other functions, produces and secretes hormones, which is why his normal growth has been prematurely accelerated. This early puberty enabled the tumor to be discovered and treatment to be rapidly started.

His father is invited to join them, and Charles-Édouard shares his diagnosis with him. Together, they meet the ophthalmologist for a full evaluation, and the oncologist, who explains the next steps. Overwhelmed with questions and emotions, Isabelle and Hugo team up to receive the news and support their son.

The results require the installation of a PAC (subcutaneous venous catheter) inserted in Charles-Édouard's chest, under general anesthesia. This small case will allow his body to receive the 70 chemotherapy treatments (vinblastine treatments) now scheduled for the next 70 Fridays, thus depriving him of several days of school. Fortunately, Charles-Édouard is doing very well in school.

These days of treatment are trying for Charles-Édouard: he has no appetite, loses all motivation, and experiences a mixture of extreme fatigue and nausea, all the while suffering from gastric reflux. However, he is often well enough the next day to resume his usual activities, such as baseball, his favorite sport.

Through all these treatments, Charles-Édouard shows immense determination, which enables him to stay positive, persevere and even discover new passions for the electric guitar and basketball and the benefits they offer. In June 2023, his 70 treatments are completed, chemotherapy having successfully stabilized the tumor's growth.

Today, Charles-Édouard still wears a PAC as a preventive measure. He has regular follow-ups with all the specialists, including in oncology, ophthalmology and endocrinology, and will continue to do so for the next few years in order to monitor the evolution of his medical condition. Despite all this, imbued with an inspiring vitality and a fascinating maturity, he continues to flourish in his sports and his music, with, at his heart, the certainty that health is the most precious of gifts.

Isabelle Pouliot, Hugo Demers and Félix-Antoine (22 years old)

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