

Every kid deserves a bike: Helping Bryden Hutt get his



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He slips his arms and hands into the handles of his crutches and pushes himself along. He's a little unsteady, but with each step he moves forward with determined confidence.

He means business.

His dad walks behind him, pushing the bike.

And not just any bike.

This is a special bike. And he's eager for his dad to push it into the open space.

He puts his crutches aside and smiles as he sits on the bike. He's excited to talk about it. His hand skims across the hand brake. Caresses the handlebars. Touches the button that turns on the flashing lights.

A short while later he's flying by on the bike.

"Brake! Brake!" yells his mother, running behind him.

He applies the brake . . . reluctantly.

Make no mistake – he likes to go fast. Especially since he's waited a lifetime for this.

Every kid deserves a bike.

And 11-year-old Bryden Hutt finally has his.

"I love it!" says Bryden when asked about getting his new bike. "I felt so happy I was almost going to cry."

The bike suits him perfectly.

"If I'm going to run into something I can just pull this right fast, and it will stop," he says about the handbrake that is easily within his reach. Given the choice, though, Bryden would rather be riding than stopping.

Throughout Bryden's life a bicycle wasn't on his parents' radar. But it was on his. A couple of years ago he attended the Heartland Tour and entered a draw to win a bike.

"At first I was apprehensive because I was thinking if he actually won the bike, how could I tell him he couldn't ride it," says his mom Wendy Hutt.

Bryden was born with Ommen's Syndrome, which left him without a functioning immune system. His childhood has been filled with doctors and medical appointments. Crutches and wheelchairs.

But his parents, Wendy and Jason, have always encouraged him to be mobile, knowing his restrictions could possibly get worse over time. Climbing monkey bars shows him, and others, that just because he's different doesn't mean he's not capable. And while he can't pedal a two-wheeled bicycle, it doesn't mean he can't ride an adapted one.

So when Bryden won the bike at the Heartland Tour a couple of years back – yup, he's a lucky kid – Manser's Bike Shop, which had donated the bike, told Bryden's parents they would donate the equivalent cost of the bike to put towards an adaptive bike.

"I was so touched," says his mom. "I hadn't thought of that possibility."

Physiotherapy is an important part of Bryden's daily life. It was also suggested by those who work with him that a bike could help him with his upper body strength. An Invacare Junior Handcycle was sent from Ontario to the IWK for a trial run for Bryden.

"We were able to take it on loan for him to use. Needless to say after this short trial time we knew we had to provide this gift (of a bike) to him, whether we needed to put it on credit or whatever," says his mom. "Just seeing his face and knowing the freedom it gave it was all we needed."

After all, every kid deserves a bike.

But a bike such as the one Bryden would require is costly. An Invacare XLT Handcycle retails for over \$3,500.

At Spears and MacLeod Pharmasave where Wendy Hutt works, the staff wanted to help.

"We wanted to help make this happen for Bryden," says office manager Susan Buchanan, who says the initial idea came from staff member Cathy LeBlanc.

Over a period of time they took a dollar a week from everybody's paycheque to put towards the bike – this worked out to \$60 a pop – and also used extra money from a coffee fund.

"We ended up with quite a bit of money and we said we'd help make up whatever (his mom) needed," explains Buchanan, who talks about the day Bryden received his bike last week. "We all had tears in our eyes because he was so excited. He didn't want to get off of it. He knew he was getting the bike. He just didn't know he was getting it that day."



Photo

- [View the gallery](#)

Another person who played a role in helping Bryden get his bike was his friend and Meadowfields schoolmate Kaya Smith. Her mom describes her as the type of girl that always wants to be involved, to be helpful.

Knowing about efforts to help raise money for the bike, Kaya drafted a letter about Bryden and told her mother Vanessa Clattenburg that she wanted to put out jars to collect donations. They picked a workplace for a jar and Kaya collected \$315. She was there when Bryden received his bike.

“It was one the most special days of my life to be able to help my friend out,” she says. “He has waited so long to have is bike. I am so happy for you Bryden. Have fun riding your bike!”

At Bryden’s school they also fundraised through a ‘Change for Change’ activity. From this the school donated \$250 towards the bike, and staff at the school contributed donations beyond this.

For Bryden’s parents, it is difficult to find the adequate words to express how grateful they are to the community and for the support that’s been extended to their son.

“Life can be rough for him at times and that’s hard for us to see. As Bryden’s mom and dad we want to provide him with everything he needs to be the most confident person he can possibly be,” says Wendy Hutt. “This community and our friends and family have helped us to provide something for our son that will build him up and strengthen him and make him unbelievably happy at the same time.”

Bryden has seen kindness extended to him for as long as his parents can remember. When he was five months old a young man from Germany named Felix Kruse was a bone marrow [donor](#) for Bryden. He is now a life-long friend.

Bryden and Felix [met](#) for the first time during a Wish Trip Bryden and his family took to Florida in 2008.

And while Bryden has had the support of the community, he’s also returned the favour.

Fundraising and sponsor efforts he has initiated have seen him raise around \$50,000 for the Children’s Wish Foundation over the years. He does this so other children can have their wishes granted. His efforts have not gone unnoticed or unappreciated. In 2012 Prime Minister Stephen Harper and David Johnston, the Governor General of Canada, presented Bryden with a Diamond Jubilee [Medal](#) in Ottawa. He was the youngest Canadian recipient of this medal recognizing outstanding contributions by individuals.

People were moved to tears when Bryden received his medal.

They were moved to tears again when he received his bike. Bryden’s ‘Thank Yous’ on this day came in the form of hugs. Those gathered at Pharmasave for the bike reveal were as excited to receive his hugs as Bryden was to receive his bike.

To everyone, Bryden offers his gratitude.

“Thank you everyone for helping me get this bike, it means a lot to me,” he says.

After all, every kid deserves a bike.

Especially Bryden.