

Taking children's health care to new heights

At École Dr. Knox Middle School in Kelowna, students and teachers have proven how small acts lead to extraordinary outcomes. It all began in 2005, when a dedicated teacher, Dave Lafontaine, rallied colleagues and students together to launch what would eventually become Bald Falcon Day—an annual event where they would shave their heads or cut their hair to raise funds for children's health.

Dave's motivation was deeply personal. His son, Jesse, was born with a heart murmur and underwent three open-heart surgeries at BC Children's Hospital. Now 26, with two master's degrees under his belt and plans to complete his medical degree, Jesse is pursuing his dreams.

As the only hospital in the province devoted exclusively to children, many families at the school have also counted on the specialized care at BC Children's. Each year, staff and students raise funds in their own unique ways throughout May.

“Our family often talks about how Jesse's early experiences in the hospital played a pivotal role in shaping his character and ambitions.”

— Dave Lafontaine

Their efforts culminate in Bald Falcon Day at the end of the month, where they gather during a special assembly to shave their heads and cut their hair to support BC's kids.

The event owes much of its success to strong support from the school's principals—along with community sponsors who generously offer incentive prizes like gift cards and iPads. Through their collective efforts, the school has had an outsized impact in tackling the toughest challenges in child health. This year's event raised a remarkable \$26,016.60, bringing the cumulative total to more than \$500,000. These funds have supported kid-tailored care, transformative research and breakthrough treatments across BC Children's Hospital.

The school is immensely grateful for the support of partners like Odlum Brown*, which matched donations of up to \$5,000 during this year's Bald Falcon Day.



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*Odlum Brown is proud to once again be the official schools program match sponsor for 2024. Gifts will be matched up to a cumulative total of \$30,000.

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Small is **MIGHTY.**



HARMEHAR, AGE 5

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