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## SUZANNE KORF: Every one of us can make a difference

**Suzanne Korf**  
The Gazette  
Thursday, February 3, 2011

As I was sitting with my younger son enjoying a hotdog after his basketball game, we flipped through the pages of last year's program book for the annual Sian Bradwell-West Island Lakers All-Star Weekend which someone had left on the table. Although I was familiar with the story of little Sian, who passed away at the age of 17 months, the photos and the story moved me to tears once again.

I explained the story and showed the pictures to my son, and spoke about how the funds were used at The Montreal Children's Hospital. He was very impressed with all that had been accomplished by Sian's parents in an effort to make some sense out of their terrible loss and to honour the memory of their beautiful young daughter.

"They did all that?" he asked.

"What if everyone did something like that?" What if ?

The Sian Bradwell Fund was established in 1990 on the sixth anniversary of Sian's birth. It raises money to purchase medical equipment for the diagnosis and treatment of children with cancer.

Last weekend marked the 11th anniversary of their WILBA All-Star Weekend and the second year of the "Shot for Sian" competition, which allows kids to raise money for kids.

They are not alone in their efforts. There are about 300 events organized by the community each year to benefit young patients at The Children's. These range from garage sales and lemonade stands to golf tournaments and gala dinners. Often they are organized by grateful parents and sometimes by patients themselves. They can be a celebration of the strength and courage of a young patient or in memory of a loved one.

Some of them raise funds for a specific department, like hematology-oncology, and some are for the most urgent needs at the existing hospital or for the construction of the new Children's on the Glen campus.

Whether the donations help purchase toys and books or fund the renovation of a room or an entire floor, the commitment and the energy of the organizers is nothing short of amazing. Their efforts would not be successful without those who support them. Those who purchase tickets, bid on auction items and advertise in program books. Volunteers who sell tickets, get sponsorships and spend countless hours worrying about little details. And these are just the events for one charity. Think of the thousands of others that are organized for hundreds of other worthy causes.

So while it may seem as if you are always pulling out your chequebook or digging into your change purse for one thing or another, and sometimes it feels a bit overwhelming, we should take pride in being able to support the efforts of those incredible people who do something to make our community a better place.

As I explained to my son, we can't all set up funds and organize events because there has to be people who support those who do. because there has to be people who support those who do.

So congratulations to the Bradwells and kudos to WILBA and to all of those who support the magnificent efforts of people making a difference.

*Suzanne Korf is a professional fundraiser who has worked for non-profit organizations for more than 25 years. She is a director of development for the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation. She is a mother of two and a resident of Pointe Claire since 1991.*

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