

## MEAGAN'S WALK

# Passing the torch of hope

When eight-year-old Carolyn Cowan first got involved with Meagan's Walk she was inside Sick Kids Hospital receiving care. This year she's giving it back.

The sixth annual paper crane ceremony took place in front of Sick Kids Hospital Thursday as a prelude to Meagan's Walk on May 11. Meagan Bebenek died in 2001 from an inoperable brain tumour. A year later, her mom Denise launched the walk — which ends with participants linking in a human hug around the hospital — to raise funds for research.

"We were the ones being hugged and we said, 'next year we'll be the ones outside giving hugs to patients,'" said Katherine Body, Carolyn's mother.

Carolyn was diagnosed with a brain tumour in 2006 and is now recovering, acting as a patient ambassador for Meagan's walk.



ROSALYN SOLOMON 24 hours

**CRANES:** Carolyn Cowan, 8, is a patient ambassador for this year's Meagan's Walk. Carolyn is recovering from a brain tumour and will participate in the full 5 kilometre walk on May 11 to raise money for cancer research.

"Don't give up," Carolyn said. The walk reached the million dollar mark last year. Denise Bebe-

nek said the goal is another million this year.

"Meagan handed the torch to me and I hand on the torch to other children," Bebenek said.

"It's all about kids helping kids."

Students from Meagan's elementary school and other schools made 1,000 paper cranes to help give her hope while she was sick, following the Japanese legend which says the cranes bring good fortune and long life.

The tradition stuck and Carolyn, along with three other patient ambassadors, received dozens of paper cranes from students wishing them well.

"It's very nice," said Carolyn who will participate in the 5k walk from Ontario Place to Sick Kids.

For more information, visit [meaganswalk.com](http://meaganswalk.com)

— Rosalyn Solomon, 24 hours