

# Remembering the girl with 'a fabulous spirit'

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The same day she left her profession as a social worker she discovered her granddaughter had a brain tumor.

"It was ironic that I found out that day," Morris explained as tears welled up in her eyes yesterday during the sixth-annual Meagan's Walk — an event honouring her granddaughter's short life. "I had six months to spend with her that I wouldn't have had if I had still been working."

In June 2001, at the age of five, Meagan Bebenek died from brain stem glioma, a terminal type of brain cancer.

To keep her fighting spirit alive, Meagan's mother, Denise Bebenek, created a five-kilometre walk beginning at Ontario Place and ending at the Hospital for Sick Children, where Meagan received treatment.

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ulous spirit," recalled Dr. Eric Bouffet, a Neuro Oncologist with Sick Kids who treats terminally-ill children. "She was so full of vision."

Yesterday's walk drew about 2,000 participants and aims to surpass its \$1-million fundraising target for brain cancer research this year.

"It's larger than life," said Bebenek. "It's about the human spirit, it's about life, it's about the families, the community ... there are no boundaries."

No space was free on the sidewalk outside the hospital as participants from as far away as Montreal, Vancouver, Halifax and Boston joined hands for a "Circle of Hope", all sharing a common vision — to find a cure for a disease that is the leading cause of death among young people up to 20 years of age.

Visit [www.meaganswalk.com](http://www.meaganswalk.com) to make a donation.

- Sophie Nicholls, 24 hours



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Four-year-old Sarah Smith, left, a patient at the Hospital for Sick Children who has a brain tumor, looks on with her mother Sue at her side as her nurse, Evelyn, right, places a ring on her finger outside the hospital yesterday during the sixth-annual Meagan's Walk.

canoe network

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Meagan's walk

By SOPHIE NICHOLLS, 24 HOURS

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