



# Savannah's Story

*I wish to go to my favourite theme park*  
**Savannah, 15**  
leukemia

Savannah's eyes light up when she's presented with a blank canvas and a selection of paint colours. The 15-year-old likes to create art and she's inspired by her favourite films and characters. While she enjoys all types of music, she's particular about cake – it must be chocolate.

Savannah was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia. This type of leukemia is a cancer of the blood and bone marrow and can spread quickly if it's not treated. At one point, Savannah's airway was only 2mm wide because of a mass that had grown. She had difficulty breathing and was rushed to a specialized treatment centre in a different city. When the mass shrunk, she was sent home to finish her chemotherapy treatments. "With COVID, things were different – only one parent can visit and no siblings," explained her mom, Amy. "It was hard on all of us to be separated especially with the daily ups and downs of treatment".

When Savannah learned her wish would be granted, she was very excited. "Her focus shifted from how awful she was feeling to researching things to do and eat at her favourite theme park," her mom said. The much-anticipated wish trip to Florida, which was originally scheduled for late September, was cut short because of Hurricane Ian. The family had to evacuate, but the trip was rescheduled.

After they finally realized their wish, Amy said one of the best memories was when the whole family, including herself, Savannah, her son Dominic, and husband David, watched fireworks after a day of roaming the theme park. "We were all overrun with emotions," she recalled. "We cried because something so horrible like childhood cancer turned into something so amazing." Savannah and her older brother were also regulars at the pool at Give Kids the World Village, a non-profit resort in Kissimmee, Florida. Seeing her two children together being regular kids meant a lot to Amy and David. "Cancer affects everyone in the family, especially siblings," she said.

Hope is essential for children with critical illnesses, and its life-changing power is unlocked when wishes like Savannah's are granted.