

## **“Things are really different now than they were two, even one year ago!”**

*7-year-old brain tumour survivor laces up for Winnipeg fundraiser on June 25*

**Winnipeg, MB, June 20, 2016** – This Saturday, on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 7-year-old Finley Kroeker will take part in the 2016 Winnipeg Brain Tumour Walk for his first time, walking with his team Finley’s Friends. Over the past two years, Finley has gone through more than what most people do their entire lives – and his brain tumour journey continues today.

“Finley was huge when he was born!” remembers his mom, Shannon. “He was more than 11 pounds at birth but then we noticed his growth slowing a lot by the time he was 2 and 3.” Seeing that Finley’s size was smaller than typical, especially compared to his peers, Shannon started looking for answers to the changes in Finley’s development. By kindergarten, with still no improvements to Finley’s progress, Shannon says that’s when he started to struggle with frequent headaches and exhaustion. After missing a week of school, Shannon and her husband took Finley, then 5 years old, to their local ER. That’s when life changed drastically, explains Shannon.

Throughout the next two years, Finley, underwent several shunt surgeries to try and control the problems caused by the inoperable tumour in his brain, and he suffered major side effects and complications like strokes – two of them – and meningitis. Attempting to remove the tumour on his pituitary gland meant the nearby hypothalamus could be damaged in-operation and massively impact Finley’s weight, hunger, sleeping and body temperature regulation, so Shannon and her husband enrolled Finley in a clinical trial for a type of radiation treatment. Since joining the study in late 2014, scans have shown Finley’s brain tumour to finally be shrinking.

Despite the weeks and months of being apart from friends and family, including, at times, his beloved older sister Zoe, Finley has stayed strong and “only really complains about getting needles,” Shannon adds, laughing. And while last year things felt too fresh for the family to take part in their local Brain Tumour Walk, they are excited to join the annual fundraiser in 2016. “We really want to raise awareness about brain tumours, so that helps bring in more funding for research – and a cure!” explains Shannon. “Plus, it’s important that Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada can keep providing the support and information people need when they are on this journey.”

This weekend, Finley and his family will take part in the 2016 Winnipeg Brain Tumour Walk scheduled for Saturday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at Assiniboine Park. Opening Ceremonies and Brain Tumour Survivor Recognition begin at 9:45am. Online registration is encouraged; there is no entry fee to participate. The Brain Tumour Walk is family-friendly and non-competitive, and features 2.5km and 5km routes.

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# Media Release, cont'd

## About the Brain Tumour Walks

Every day in Canada, 27 people are diagnosed with a brain tumour. That's 10,000 new diagnoses each year. By signing up and fundraising as part of a Brain Tumour Walk, patients, survivors, family and friends join the nationwide movement to end brain tumours. Their efforts support Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada's specialized resources that empower patients to be their own best health care advocates and fund the ground-breaking research that will find a cure for the disease. For more than two decades, Brain Tumour Walks (formerly Spring Sprints) have been the community event to bring together thousands of Canadians in tribute to and in memory of people affected by a brain tumour. **For more information about the 20+ Brain Tumour Walks taking place across Canada in 2016, visit [www.BrainTumourWalk.ca](http://www.BrainTumourWalk.ca).**

## About Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada

Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada is the only national charity that offers information and support to patients affected by any kind of brain tumour – be it cancerous, non-malignant or metastases. The organization also funds research across North America and, since 1982, has dedicated more than \$4 million to finding a cure for the disease and improving treatment for brain tumour survivors. **Learn more at Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada's website: [www.BrainTumour.ca](http://www.BrainTumour.ca).**

**To interview the Kroekers or for further information about the Winnipeg Brain Tumour Walk, contact:**

Katrina Fortner, Alphabet Soup Communications  
519.902.8209 | [katrina@alphabetsoupcommunications.com](mailto:katrina@alphabetsoupcommunications.com)