Hello!

We closed the year 2019 with rocketing ambitions for 2020. But like many of our peers, we reviewed this ambition downwards in order to stay on track despite the challenges. But you were compelled by our projects and you bore with us beyond our wildest expectations: together, we were able to continue the promotion of better treatments for children with cancer.

We are almost four years old now and ready to keep kicking for the long run! We are proud, almost emotional but definitely super excited to present to you this end-of-year newsletter.

Let’s move on swiftly to 2021 but before that, we wish you a lot of solidarity and warmth for the holidays’ season.

The KickCancer Team

KickCancer 2020 in numbers

1 100 000 € raised over the year
12 000 éclairs eaten up for a good cause
750 RUN TO KICK runners
50 bakers united during the Éclair Day
7 new research projects selected in 2020
2 ambassadors who spread the word about us: Angèle and Gui Home
1 new juicy collaboration with think tomato

And yet 2/3 young survivors still suffering from long-term side effects.
Patients Long-Term Follow-Up: a very first support to a Belgian initiative... with European ramifications

KickCancer’s signature strategy is that we finance pan-European research projects. The long-term follow-up project is peculiar because it entirely Belgian and it will not only improve the quality of care for young patients but it will also enable our national oncology units to contribute more actively to the European research effort.

Today, in Belgium, 87% children with cancer are alive five years after their initial diagnosis. However, the treatments leading to their remission are exposing them to increased co-morbidities risk and premature mortality (up to 80% patients).

Many young survivors do not even realise the situation they are in, do not know which treatments they have been administered and in Belgium, there is no organised specific long-term follow-up plan that is adapted to their medical history. That type of medical consultation, which oftentimes needs to be much longer than a “standard” 20-minutes consultation, is not specifically reimbursed.

As a result, the aim of the project is to:
- Improve our understanding of long-term side effects caused by the treatments received by young patients.
- Enable the Belgian paediatric oncology units to contribute to the European research effort by enriching European databases.
- Compare the survival and long-term toxicity figures affecting the Belgian patients with those of patients from other European countries.
- To provide each patient with a summary of the treatments they received and a tailor-made follow-up plan; as a result, those patients will be able to take care of their own health and not just suffer from those long-term side effects caused by, where possible, preventing or reducing them;
- Advocate with the Minister of Health the set-up of a specific financing for the “long-term follow-up” consultations.

That type of medical consultation, which in my consultation are shocked and yet relieved that they understand that all the seemingly unrelated health problems they are suffering from are all connected to some essential lessons: the value of family and of our strength of the family cell as a whole, the brothers and sisters... who also suffered, in their own way, from the situation which caused them emotional distress and anguish.

On the bright side, we also learned from this experience some essential lessons: the value of family and of our friends who supported us without fail. But first and foremost, our children became extremely mature and appreciated life with so much joy and clarity... the other day, I was talking with a “chemo friend” about our fears for the future of our children in the current ecological and geopolitical context and our conclusion was the following: we were less worried for our own little survivors because we know that they are full of resources that no one would have imagined!
I DARE YOU TO GO THROUGH CHEMO.

KickCancer Challenge: Thierry’s crazy bet to “transform a nightmare into a sunshine”

When he was attending Orvil’s funerals, a twelve-year-old boy taken by a brain tumour, Thierry rolled the dice and... was plunged into a mad sport adventure with solid philanthropic and emotional ramifications... and he took the wonderful decision to involve KickCancer.

His real-life day job is director. No wonder, as a result, that Thierry succeeded in orchestrating a mind-blowing challenge and creating a strong community of kickers around his project at the pace of videos on social media where he explained his training program and his moments of emotions. Every video was an invitation to support him under the motto “Your gifts are my fuel”. At the heart of the lockdown, his appointments became a welcome distraction for all his followers who were turned into players of the KickCancer Challenge as they were invited to post their own “kicks” every week.

Thierry had two major aims: run across Belgium by connecting Aubange to De Panne in 9 days but also raise awareness on the need to do more research on pediatric cancers. Today, he ran the 450 km as promised and he also succeeded in fundraising 38.000 €. What a success!

Life gives back to those who give themselves because along the way, Thierry had the incredible chance to meet Elliott, a young boy in remission who became his greatest fan. He also found back the sparkle in Orvil’s father’s eye, his childhood friend, who accompanied him all the way across Belgium.

If you consider to start your own challenge for KickCancer, Thierry would tell you: “you are capable of much more than you would imagine provided you have the motivation. (...) If you adopt a positive attitude and rely on your own talents, things will work out by themselves quite easily”.

No more hesitation and head to our website for your own challenge team.kickcancer.org.

“The KickCancer Challenge was a fabulous gift from a friend. What made me the happiest, is the fact that through this Challenge, Orvil remained alive and we had a chance to talk about his shining personality. (...) Orvil did not want that other children suffer the way he did. So, financing research to improve the current treatments would have made a lot of sense to him.”

Aïcha, Orvil’s mother

Children’s cancer.
I donate.

kickcancer.org