



The
pirate ship
FOUNDATION

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Pirate Day in May 2019 Announced

Right across the nation, children, office workers and whole townships are encouraged to embrace their inner buccaneer and dress up like a pirate throughout the month of May in support of childhood brain cancer research.

Previously known as Pirate Day Friday and held in June, organisers have taken a collaborative approach to fighting the disease by aligning with May's Brain Cancer Action Month.

Now in its fifth year, the filibuster fundraiser has become a national favourite with its aim to raise money and awareness for research into the treatment and cure of childhood brain cancer – a disease that kills more children in Australia than any other.

Pirate Day in May was a concept conceived in tragic circumstances when in 2014 Nathan Colgan of Perth, learned his son, Conor (then five-years-old), had an aggressive brain tumour.

[Read more](#)

“The more I read up on the disease, the more heart broken I became,” the distraught dad shared.

“I discovered that for every two children diagnosed with a brain tumour, one will sadly lose their life. And the ones that do survive often have severe, lasting side effects. The only way to change this is to put more funding into scientific research,” said Nathan.

By donning of an eye patch and making a donation, every Australian can make a serious difference.

Last year more than 600 schools and early learning centres around Australia along with workplaces and rum bars got behind the cause. Since Pirate Day Friday started in 2015, over



Advancing discovery in childhood brain cancer research

ACN: 617 078 485

\$280,000 has been raised for scientific studies to find kinder, more effective treatments for the disease that childhood cancer research.

All funds raised from the campaign, which is a collaboration between The Kids' Cancer Project in the Eastern States and The Pirate Ship Foundation in WA, are directed to funding vital childhood brain cancer research.

This year, funds will be directed specifically to Dr Nick Gottardo, a paediatric oncologist and scientist based at The Telethon Kids' Institute in Perth. [Read more](#)

Matthew Fitzgerald, Chairman of The Pirate Ship Foundation is delighted with the continued success of the initiative.

"Pirate Day in May allows kids to have a bit of fun in fundraising while acknowledging the very serious nature of kids' cancer. This is a disease that kills more Australian kids than any other, and as the causes of childhood cancer are unknown, we must continue to support the researchers in improving treatments and survival rates," he said.

The Pirate Ship Foundation is an independent Perth-based charity supporting childhood brain cancer research. Over the past 7 years, the charity has seen more than \$7 million directed to childhood brain cancer research as a result of Pirate Day, The Adventurers, The BrainChild Ball, CEO Walk the Plank and numerous other community fundraising events.

"It is only through research that my son Conor, who is now nine, has defied the odds and is still with us today," said Nathan. "I wish I could say he has been cured of his illness but sadly his fight against cancer is not yet over and neither is mine."

"Our journey continues, but with the support of every Australian who takes part in Pirate Day, we have the courage to keep going," Nathan said.

All Australians are encouraged to register their Pirate Day in May at piratedayinmay.com.au

The facts:

- Brain tumours are the most common form of solid tumours among children.
- Brain cancer kills more children in Australia than any other disease¹.
- As with other tumours in kids and adults, surgery is the primary treatment, usually followed by radiation treatment and/or chemotherapy.
- Because a child's brain is still developing, these treatments result in more substantial and permanent side effects than they would for an adult.

¹ *Australian Bureau of Statistics (published 2012 – 2016), 3303.0 Causes of Death, Australia (2011 – 2015), 'Table 1.3: Underlying cause of death, Selected causes by age at death, numbers and rates, Australia, Ages 1 – 14 (2011 – 2015).*



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Notes to editors:

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FACTS ABOUT BRAIN CANCER and THE PIRATE SHIP FOUNDATION.

- Brain cancer **kills more children than any other disease in Australia**
- Brain tumours are the most common paediatric solid cancer, affecting 200 children in Australia each year.
- The Brain Tumour Research Program is a collaborative group of researchers at Telethon Kids Institute in Perth dedicated to improving our understanding of paediatric brain tumour biology and finding more effective treatments to improve survival rates and quality of life for patients.
- The Pirate Ship Foundation Limited operates various for-cause activities and events, including the BrainChild Ball, Walk the Plank, The Adventurers and Pirate Day in May.
- Pirate Day in May is a joint collaboration between The Pirate Ship Foundation and the The Kids Cancer Project (TKCP).
- The Foundation has contributed over \$7 million to research and collaboration into childhood brain cancer in WA.

