

TOP NEWS

'Cool Kids' Cafe' to raise money for cancer patients

Kelsey Volkmann, The Examiner
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Westminster -

A Westminster boy's idea of a "Cool Kids' Cafe" has been adopted as a fundraiser by a regional campaign aimed at collecting money to buy toys for cancer patients.

"I'm a person who likes to invent things," said Christopher Gavin, 9, who finished third grade at Winfield Elementary School.

The Cockeysville-based Cool Kids Campaign is inviting anyone — from Boy Scouts to athletic groups — to hold their own children-run restaurant to raise money for iPods and GameBoys for patients, said Sharon Perfetti, who runs the campaign.

"This is a way to get kids involved in helping other kids," she said.

She said groups have contacted her about organizing their own fundraisers. Children are encouraged to design their own menus and cook and serve the meals, she said.

The campaign's poster child is Erik Lerch, a 13-year-old Mount Airy boy who passed away in March after battling cancer for three years.

"His purpose in life was to bring out the best in everyone," said his mother, Joan Lerch.

While Johns Hopkins Children's Center offered toys for younger oncology patients, she said, entertainment beyond a television and a VCR was not available for her son.

Christopher, who lives with his parents, Michelle and John Gavin, and two younger brothers in Sun Valley, held a backyard restaurant last summer with 10 other children, serving 30 neighbors.

Christopher wants to hold his own cafe in July.

At a glance

The Cool Kids Campaign is a part of the Belanger-Federico-Pitterich Foundation, which raises funds to fight lung cancer and childhood disease. The project was launched in December to improve the comfort of pediatric oncology patients at the Johns Hopkins and University of Maryland hospitals.

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