

Turning lemons into lemonade for CancerCare MB



Wynn Mitchell, Maxine Schlesinger, Ellie, Emerson, and employee champion, Michelle Whetter (Enterprise Excellence), sold Lemonade for Hope to raise funds for CancerCareMB this summer.

Alt-text: Wynn, Maxine, Ellie, Emerson, and Michelle posing in front of the Lemonade Stand for Hope inside Manitoba Hydro Place.

There's nothing quite like the sweet, tart, thirst-quenching power of lemonade.

It's a simple recipe; lemons, sugar, and water. But when you add a dash of fundraising, it becomes a recipe for hope.

Ellie, Emerson, Wynn and Maxine — along with three other friends from school banded together with [The Lemonade Stand for Hope](#) this summer in support of three of their mothers, who are on a journey with cancer.

“So many families are affected by cancer. This initiative has made the girls feel like they're helping other people in a similar situation — beyond just their moms,” said **Michelle Whetter** (Enterprise Excellence). “It's due to donations that so much research goes into cancer care in Manitoba. It's how I'm able to get a lot of the tests and treatments I need.”

According to the CancerCare Foundation, 19 Manitobans receive a cancer diagnosis every single day, and two in five Canadians will be diagnosed in their lifetime.

Proceeds from the lemonade stands go toward funding cancer prevention, early detection, clinical trials, leading-edge research, and treatment in Manitoba. Donations fund over 65 per cent of the pediatric trials in our province. Every dollar raised stays in Manitoba.

“It was really great and so many people came! I think we’re over \$11,000.00 in donations now,” said Michelle’s daughter, Ellie. At the time of publishing, the girls have raised \$12,605.00 since June.



“I’m so proud of the girls for all they’ve accomplished with the Lemonade Stand for Hope,” said Michelle. “Their fundraising this summer gives the girls a sense of purpose and pride in all this, rather than standing at the sidelines.”

Alt-text: The girls tending the lemonade stand while people stand in line.

“My doctor told me treatment would be like a fulltime job — he was right. I could not have imagined how much time I’d spend at hospitals,” said Michelle. “It’s definitely scary, but I feel so fortunate to have all these incredible people supporting me – including from the Hydro family.”

Michelle said Kathleen Hodgson (Community Investment) suggested holding a stand in the Hydro gallery and reminded her of the Manitoba Hydro Employee Champion Initiative. It’s an initiative that provides a \$750 donation to the cause when employee champions raise \$500 for a CRA-approved charity.

“I’ve always been a donor to CancerCare Manitoba through the myCharity program, along with other Manitoba Hydro affiliated charitable organizations. But I never expected to be on this side of it,” said Michelle. “I now realize the incredible cost of helping people with cancer, and I’m just so grateful for all the generous people who’ve donated so far. It helps to give people a chance.”

After five months of intense chemotherapy and two separate mastectomy surgeries due to reoccurring cancer, Michelle's doctor says he has never seen this type of cancer grow so aggressively.

"They're taking my case to share with a bunch of different oncologists for input and research purposes," said Michelle. "We're hoping for a good plan forward."

Despite the fear and uncertainty, Michelle said the staff at CancerCare have been wonderful, and she feels grateful to live in a province where a lot of the care she needs is accessible to her.

You can still support the Lemonade for Hope fundraiser — [Donate directly here](#).

Learn more about the [Employee Champion initiative](#) and how you can add dollars to your fundraising initiative.

myCharity also launches [October 1](#), giving you an opportunity to donate to CancerCare Manitoba and more than two dozen other charities through payroll deduction.