



Braeden's Story

I wish to be a Blue Jay

Braeden, 3
Cardiac Condition



3-year-old Braeden, diagnosed with a cardiac condition, absolutely loves baseball and asked his parents to read him the baseball rule book all the time. He is very passionate about his favourite team - the Toronto Blue Jays – so Braeden wished to be a Blue Jay! Braeden’s mom says that watching the Blue Jay’s Russell Martin catching on TV inspired Braeden to learn how to squat and walk. The Blue Jays have been his inspiration for everything!

Braeden's wish was granted in July 2017. On his Wish Day, Braeden met Blue Jays players in the locker room, watched batting practice and hung out with ACE & Jose Bautista. Afterwards, Braeden and his family watched the Blue Jay's game.

Braeden can't stop talking about his wish day, and his mom says the impact lasted far beyond the day itself. Before his wish, it took longer to recover from surgery, and Braeden relied on his walker to get around. After the wish trip, he seemed to approach things differently. He recovered quickly from procedures and insisted on walking by himself more. The opportunity to meet the Blue Jays gave Braeden a different outlook on his condition and his day-to-day life.

“This experience meant everything to him.”



Braeden's Story

I wish to be a Toronto Blue Jays player

Braeden, 9
congenital heart disease

Wish granted in 2017



Braeden's mom Cassandra jokes that her son is a "human garburator" and devours mostly anything that is put in front of him. When he's not folding a slice of pizza into his mouth, the now nine-year-old is playing with his four siblings, helping at home, and building LEGO. His mom says he prefers comedy films and he "turns a nice shade of purple" when he laughs.

The active boy plays baseball in the summer and volt hockey in the colder months. The latter is an accessible form of hockey played in a specially designed hockey sport chair for players with limited upper mobility. Last September he traveled to the World Cup Volt Hockey in Gävle, Sweden.

Braeden was born with hypoplastic left heart syndrome, a condition that affects normal blood flow through the heart. His first heart surgery took place when he was just three days old, and since then, he's had three more surgeries all before his 4th birthday. He was also diagnosed with scoliosis and juvenile arthritis and, in total, has undergone nine surgeries and several treatments for his heart and other conditions.

Braeden, a life-long fan of the Toronto Blue Jays, was surprised to hear about his wish to visit the team just a month before the trip. To say he was excited was an understatement! His mom said it was incredible to see her then-three-year-old standing on centre field with Ace, the Jays' mascot, and José Bautista, the team's former star right fielder. Braeden also toured the team's clubhouse and met most of the team's star players. "So many of the pictures from meeting the players are blurry because he couldn't stop bouncing up and down in excitement," Cassandra said. She added that the wish trip took place before his last heart surgery and was beneficial in keeping his spirits up. "It's amazing how having such a happy experience can have such a positive impact on a child going through tough times."

Hope is essential for children with critical illnesses, and its life-changing power is unlocked when wishes like Braeden's are granted. Together we can continue to transform lives, one wish at a time.