



2018 CSCGP Middle School Teen Essay Contest

3rd Place Winner

Mae Harvey

I Get By With the Help of My Friends

Cancer sucks. You want to know why? It harms so many people in so many different ways. When I heard the three words "I have cancer," come out of my mother's mouth I thought it was the end of the world. In January of 2017, my mom had felt ill for quite some time, since Thanksgiving. After going to several doctors' appointments my mom had been diagnosed with breast cancer. At the time I was in 7th grade and still didn't know much about the medical world, so I was scared. My brother, Tristan, was also confused and nervous. My friends were very supportive and understanding of my situation and kept me going. Although I stayed silent around my teachers, they always encouraged me to do my best and were usually nice.

Shortly after my mother was diagnosed she began to go through chemo. Looking back, it went by fast. Anyways, mom had changed a lot after her first few chemo sessions. Her long, curly, black (Polish) hair that she was proud of had been shaved off and she was bald. She was noticeably more tired and weaker than before; grumpy too.

Family friends of ours helped during this time by dropping off meals at our house; former teachers of mine from my elementary school also did.

Speaking of teachers, I was very awkward around teachers. Whether they were outside of school or in, I never talked to them about my situation. I never thought there was a need to, and I never really trusted any of them. Yes, I love them all dearly, but I didn't need them to pity me, if that makes sense. Only my friends knew.

Then one day the guidance counselor at Barclay, my elementary school where my brother goes, decided to email all Barclay teachers and even my guidance counselor at Tamanend about our situation. While

I Get By With Help From my Friends

my family was fine with it, I was not. I was angry and didn't really want people to know something that is not their business. I'm still a little unhappy about it.

As I mentioned before, during the time of my mom's chemo rounds, I was in my first year of middle school. And oh boy, there was drama; in my friend group, within the grades, teachers, all the normal stuff. So in other words. I also had to put up with the stupidity at school while my mom was fighting.

Another family who helped were the Kingeters, who live up the street from me. Their daughter Riley rides horses with me and they always were so flexible and helpful when it came to driving me to my lessons. They even drove me to a lesson on the night of my mom's surgery.

My riding instructor Joy was the best too. She was definitely one of the brightest lights in this dark time. Joy is such a kind, caring human being, and has always been there for me, especially during this time. In the middle of my lesson, Joy assured me my mother's surgery had gone well.

I am thankful for everyone who helped me and my family during this time. My family and I grew closer and we learned what's most important in life.

It was a tough journey, but I knew my mother was stronger, and that she would kick cancer's ass.