

Pass It On®...

Never, Ever Give Up.

The incredible story of the 12-year-old cancer patient who brings joy to half a million children fighting cancer.

Life can feel terribly unfair. And yet for some people, when life hands them the worst possible circumstance, they are at their absolute best.

Jessie Joy Rees is just such a person. The blonde-haired, California kid with the big personality as fun as a day at the beach became the voice of courage for kids with cancer. How can so much good be packaged in one so small? Athletic and outgoing, Jessie had her whole world in front of her, until she was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor in 2011.

Three weeks into her treatment, Jessie asked an uncharacteristically mature question for such a young girl. She looked out at the other children who were also going through cancer treatment and asked her parents: "How can we help them?" Jessie's heart was bigger than any tumor. She wanted to comfort other kids who were going through treatment; she wanted them to be happy, no matter what. The morning after her diagnoses, Jessie was at the kitchen table assembling bags of toys for other cancer patients. "She was determined to make other cancer kids happy," her father Erik tenderly remembers. "How could we not help?"

12-year-old Jessie had a 1% chance of beating cancer. So, she decided to make the most of her time. The packages became hospital-safe plastic jars stuffed with toys, crafts and activities to surprise children while they are in the hospital for treatment. Aptly named JoyJars® using Jessie's middle name, JoyJars contain a little bit of fun during mundane days, but mostly they contain a little bit of Jessie's optimism that fills the room every time one is opened. One mother sent a tender thank you: "JoyJars have helped lift our spirits during Travis' ongoing battle with his brain tumor."

It is a special soul who can radiate so much good in so short a time. Jessie Joy Rees passed away less than a year from her diagnosis. But her parents keep the joy alive. More than 400,000 JoyJars have been delivered to children undergoing cancer

treatment in all 50 states and over 50 countries. For each, there is a bit of Joy to help them through the tough times. And to give them courage, there's also a bracelet stamped with Jessie's mantra: Never Ever Give Up. "Jessie would never ever give up," says Erik. "And neither will we. Every child facing cancer should know they are loved and supported." For more information visit www.negu.org

No matter how long or short our lives turn out to be, there is always room for a little joy.

Never Ever Give Up...PassItOn.com

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

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