

Please Dress Me in Red

In my dual profession as an educator and health care provider, I have worked with numerous children infected with the virus¹⁾ that causes AIDS. The relationships that I have had with these special kids have been gifts in my life. They have taught me so many things, but I have especially learned that great courage can be found in the smallest of packages²⁾. Let me tell you about Tyler.

Tyler was born infected with HIV; his mother was also infected. From the very beginning of his life, he was dependent on medications to enable him to survive. When he was five, he had a tube surgically³⁾ inserted in a vein⁴⁾ in his chest. This tube was connected to a pump, which he carried in a small backpack on his back. Medications were hooked up⁵⁾ to this pump and were continuously supplied through this tube to his bloodstream. At times⁶⁾, he also needed supplemented oxygen to support his breathing.

Tyler wasn't willing to give up one single moment of his childhood to this deadly disease. It was not unusual to find him playing and racing around his backyard, wearing his medicine-laden backpack and dragging his tank of oxygen behind him in his little wagon. All of us who knew Tyler marveled⁷⁾ at his pure joy in being alive and the energy it gave him. Tyler's mom often teased him by telling him that he moved so fast she needed to dress him in red. That way, when she peered through the window to check on him playing in the yard, she could quickly spot him.

This dreaded disease eventually wore down⁸⁾ even the likes of a little dynamo⁹⁾ like Tyler. He grew quite ill and, unfortunately, so did his HIV-infected mother. When it became apparent that he wasn't going to survive, Tyler's mom talked to him about death. She comforted him by telling Tyler that she was dying too, and that she would be with him soon in heaven.

A few days before his death, Tyler beckoned¹⁰⁾ me over to his hospital bed and whispered, "I might die soon. I'm not scared. When I die, please dress me in red. Mom promised she's coming to heaven, too. I'll be playing when she gets there, and I want to make sure she can find me."

By Cindy Dee Holms

请给我穿上红色的衣服

作为一名教育和保健护理工作，我曾经和数不清的感染上艾滋病病毒的孩子打过交道。我和这些特殊的孩子之间的关系是生活赋予我的恩赐。他们教会我许多东西，我尤其懂得了即使是最弱小的人物身上也能发现其所蕴含的巨大勇气。让我告诉你泰勒的故事。

泰勒出生前就从母体感染上艾滋病病毒。自他来到人间就一直靠药物维持生命。他5岁时做手术，胸部插了一根管子，管子连着他背的背包里的泵。泵不断地把药通过管子输入他

学英语，练听力，上听力课堂！

的血液。有时他还需要补充氧气帮助呼吸。

泰勒不愿把童年的一分一秒屈服于致命的疾病。经常能发现他背着装药的背包和拖着载有氧气罐的小车在他家后院玩耍奔跑。我们所有认识泰勒的人都惊叹生命带给他那纯朴的欢乐和赋予他的活力。泰勒的妈妈经常逗他说，他动得那么快，得给他穿件红衣服。这样，她透过窗户查看他在院子里玩得怎样时，能一眼发现他。

可怕的疾病最终还是拖垮了精力充沛得像台小电动机似的泰勒。他的病情越来越严重，不幸的是，身染艾滋病病毒的妈妈也病入膏肓。泰勒即将撒手人寰时，妈妈和他谈起死亡。她安慰他说，她也将要离开人世，不久会和他在天堂见面。

泰勒病逝前几天，招呼我到他病床前，低声对我说，“我可能就要死了，我不害怕。我死时，请给我穿上红色的衣服。妈妈答应我她也会来天堂的。她来的时候我会在玩，我得保证她能找到我。”