

Protecting our tomorrows: Portraits of Meningococcal Disease ^[1]

Patient Perspectives ^[2]



Protecting Our Tomorrows centers on a collection of powerful photos Geddes is capturing that portray survivors and families who have lost someone to the disease. Geddes, who will travel to three continents and seven countries during the next year to meet and photograph these inspiring families, recently released the first portraits captured on her journey, which began in Australia.

Six-year-old Bernadette of Sydney was just 3 when her parents noticed some typical bacterial meningitis symptoms: high fever and spots on her body. They immediately rushed her to a hospital, but despite receiving quick and appropriate medical care, three weeks later, they had to make the difficult decision to amputate their daughter's legs below the knees. She also lost some fingers to the disease. "For us, our choice was, 'We lose a limb or we lose her life,'" Bernadette's mother recalls.

Bernadette, who survived her bout with the disease thanks to surgery, was among the first children Geddes photographed for the *Protecting Our Tomorrows* campaign.

"It is my goal that these images will capture the inspiration and strength of these survivors while illustrating the life-changing impact this disease has on families every year," Geddes says. "I'm trying to raise the level of awareness of this insidious disease by showing these brave survivors how beautiful and how courageous they are, but that this can be avoided."

Video of Protecting Our Tomorrows: Portraits of Meningococcal Disease

Geddes' images of meningococcal disease survivors will be published as an e-book on April 24, 2014, to mark World Meningitis Day.

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