



Jack Paddon(left), seven years old, plays with best friend and twin, Darby.

different strokes for little folks

When Jack awoke screaming two years ago, a stroke was the last thing on his parents' minds. Although Jack displayed the characteristic symptoms of stroke – one-side paralysis, loss of speech and dizziness – because of his age, his local hospital first thought he had a brain tumour. When they discovered that Jack had suffered a stroke, they immediately sent him to The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) in Toronto, Canada.

Childhood stroke has only recently been recognized as a serious health concern. At SickKids, Dr. Gabrielle deVeber, a world leader in understanding childhood strokes, has piloted an international registry of childhood stroke centres to establish best practices. Her work has already shown that as many as five or six children in 100,000 suffer stroke annually.

In her research, Dr. deVeber has found that 40 per cent of childhood stroke patients have long-lasting disability, 20 per cent have recurrent stroke events and another 25 per cent suffer seizures. Thanks to this pioneering work at SickKids, doctors worldwide will be better informed to recognize, treat and manage childhood stroke and give kids a chance to be healthy.

Jack continues to receive occupational therapy and physiotherapy at a rehabilitation hospital, but thanks to his treatment and therapy at SickKids, Jack and Darby play 'almost like the old days'.

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