



Mira's Story

I wish to meet sloths

Mira, 10
brain tumour

The slow and deliberate sloth has fascinated Mira since she learned about the long-limbed mammal at the age of three. Her parents, Aaron and Bridget, read her a book about the Sloth Sanctuary of Costa Rica, and Mira fell in love with Buttercup, the world's oldest captive-living three-toed sloth.

The inquisitive 10-year-old also enjoys learning about llamas and pangolins, a scaly anteater found in Africa and Asia. Mira taps into her creativity by knitting, painting, and crafting unique creations from rubber bands with her Rainbow Loom. Her favourite meals are Raman and wonton soup, and she satisfies her sweet tooth with Jolly Rancher suckers and Skittles.

When Mira was nine years old, she began experiencing painful headaches, light sensitivity, and severe bouts of nausea. The search for a diagnosis became urgent after she suffered a seizure in the kitchen of her family home. Tests revealed tumours on Mira's brain and spine. She underwent brain surgery to remove the tumour, followed by several rounds of both high and low-dose chemotherapy. Following this, Mira took oral chemotherapy at home and underwent monthly spinal injections. Since then, she's received additional rounds of radiation to her brain and spine and numerous MRI and CT scans. "No one wants to hear that their child has brain cancer – we were all very scared, although Mira was quite brave and stoic about it all," recalled Aaron. "I'm pretty sure she was the bravest out of all of us most days."

When Mira discovered she could choose her own special wish, she asked to visit the sloth sanctuary she'd first heard about. With her younger brother Titus by her side, the family boarded a plane bound for Central America. WestJet staff were notified of Mira's wish in advance and surprised her with a giant stuffed sloth on her seat. Highlights of the wish include interacting with sloths from a close range in their natural habitat, listening to howler monkeys as the family ziplined beneath their nests and, for Mira, getting the courage to venture down to the beach. "Mira's wish trip has given our family some really fun, cool, and happy memories to look back on." Aaron added, "it has also given her a renewed love of chocolate and a new love of coffee."

Hope is essential for children with critical illnesses, and its life-changing power is unlocked when wishes like Mira's are granted. Together we can continue to transform lives, one wish at a time.