

CHARLIE MULKEY, MY HERO

The dictionary describes a hero as a person who is admired or idealized for courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities. I believe that all the CFers who battle this disease are heroes.

This is Charlie Mulkey, he has Cystic Fibrosis and he is my hero! He may look a little thinner than your average teenager and he may cough a little more but other than that you would never know he is sick and fights a battle every day to stay healthy. He never complains about the disease; he complains about treatments occasionally. That is one of the difficult things about this disease. People don't see CFers as being sick so they don't think that donating to our cause is important. They don't know that they can help them breathe easier with a small donation. They don't know that these heroes walk among us every day.

As a parent of a child with CF it is hard not to want to explain to the people who give us "those" looks every day when we are out and Charlie is coughing, that he isn't contagious, or when they see us take extra precautions to keep him healthy like using hand sanitizer constantly, or when we give him a handful of pills to take before a meal... I want to tell them why! I want to tell them to stop staring.

Somedays I just want to cry. When we found out that Charlie was going to be granted a make a wish, we started talking about what he wanted. We talked about trips, computers and maybe meeting someone and then Charlie said to me, "Mom, what if my wish was to have a cure for Cystic Fibrosis?" Those are the tough days. As parents we do all we can for our children, we want to fight their battles. When another child is mean to them we want to step in and defend them, and this battle against CF is one that I would gladly fight for him but I can only encourage him to fight it by himself by taking his meds and doing his treatments AND by raising money to find a cure for it.

So yes, Charlie Mulkey is my hero!

~ Judi Mulkey, Charlies Mom