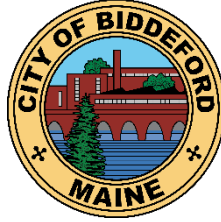


CITY OF BIDDEFORD, MAINE

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PRESS RELEASE

City of Biddeford to Hold Blood Drive on July 12; Raising Awareness for Childhood Cancer

BIDDEFORD (June 30, 2022) – The City of Biddeford will host a community blood drive in partnership with the American Red Cross of Northern New England on Tuesday, July 12, 2022.

The City’s inspiration for hosting the upcoming Blood Drive is Kenny, a four-year-old Biddeford resident who is fighting Childhood Atypical Teratoid Rhabdoid Tumor, also known as ATRT. Atypical teratoid rhabdoid tumors are rare, aggressive tumors of the central nervous system that are difficult to cure. They occur primarily in the cerebellum, the part of the brain that controls movement and balance, and the brain stem, which controls basic body functions. Only about 58 people in the United States are diagnosed with ATRT each year.



Above: Kenny, age 4, has been diagnosed with ATRT and relies on blood donations for transfusions.

Since his diagnosis, Kenny has undergone aggressive radiation and chemotherapy, as well as more than 10 blood transfusions. The supply of blood needs to be replenished constantly, according to the Red Cross, with someone in the U.S. needing blood every two seconds. The help of volunteer blood donors is critical to meet the need for transfusions that are key for helping cancer patients in Southern Maine like Kenny.

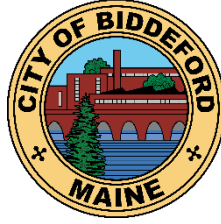
“ATRT has no known cure, and every day, kids like Kenny rely on blood from donors to help them in the fight for their lives,” said Tammy Harvison, Kenny’s grandmother. “I am calling on everyone in the Biddeford community to join our family in this fight by spreading the word about ATRT, funding research to help find a cure to childhood brain cancer, and donating blood on July 12.”

“Tammy reached out to me earlier this year asking what the City could do to help bring awareness to childhood cancer, especially ATRT, and encourage the community to help childhood cancer patients,” said Mayor Alan Casavant. “I urge you to learn more about ATRT and donate blood if you are able - it only takes a few minutes, and it can save a life.”


Appointments are available between 11 AM and 4 PM at the J. Richard Martin Community Center gymnasium, located at 189 Alfred Street. The Prospect Street entrance can be used to

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access the gym and is wheelchair accessible. To register to donate, please visit <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=Biddeford>. To learn more about Kenny and ATRT, visit <https://linktr.ee/Kennystrong>.

According to the Red Cross, donors with all blood types are needed, especially those with types O negative, A negative and B negative.

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