Kaden Cowles

Per. 2

College Essay

The Bandana. The symbol I grew up around was that bandana. My Mother’s best friend had a child that was my age, so since the day I was born, I practically had a best friend. We grew up doing everything together and we were inseparable, and still are.

Although, for about a year, I didn't get to see her. I was around five or six at the time so I didn't know any better and was told that she had just moved to Temecula. But when I finally did see her, she had on a blue and orange bandana and her skin was very pale. I figured that she had just moved somewhere where it was cold.

I always asked her why she wore the bandana yet whenever I did she would always get really quiet and not answer me and whenever I asked her to take it off (because she used to have the most gorgeous hair) she refused. I asked my mom why she wore the bandana but she only said it was part of her new “style” and thats how the kids dressed up in Temecula.

One day when she was over for a playdate, we were swinging on the swings and she was still wearing that colorful bandana. Suddenly she fell off, and when she hit the ground the bandana came off too. She had a clean buzzcut and had shorter hair than me. I helped her up and didn't say a word because I could tell she was embarrassed. We got back on the swings and asked her why she had cut all her hair off, and she simply replied that she had to go through chemo and was embarrassed to be a girl with no hair so thats why she wore the bandana. I didn't know what chemo was, but I thought it must've been something her school made her do or something.

I expressed to her how she was so silly to be embarrassed and that lots of people have short hair, it didn't mean I thought any different of her, she was still my best friend.

Her hair stayed bald for what seemed like a year; but slowly it did grow back to its original length it was when we were much younger. Nothing changed in my eyes growing up with her whether she had short hair or long hair. Most kids my age would have judged a girl with short hair (or no hair at all) saying she looked like a boy and making fun of her. But in my eyes, she was simply my best friend, hair length did not determine who she was to me.

Later, her and my parents both explained to be how she had bone cancer and that she was a very lucky survivor. Despite how strange and scary to me that was- reflecting back and realizing why she had pale skin and short hair- it just made me realize how lucky I was to have such a significant friend like her.

Nowadays, that same girl is still my best friend and I even got the blessing to attend the same high school as her. My life would be so different without her and shes helped show me that life is so precious. Growing up with my best friend as a cancer patient has inspired me to pursue a career in helping others like her so kids can grow up and share the same memories and experiences with their lifelong friends as well.