James Windsor

Twenty-three years old with big plans for the future. That was James Windsor. He was an athlete whose favourite sport was hockey and he loved kids; he coached a team of youngsters in his home town of Bromont, Quebec. His dream was to become a music promoter. Then it all came crashing down – a diagnosis of melanoma. Six months later he was dead.

"He fought the good fight," says his mother Diane Decelles. "But the melanoma was just too aggressive." James did whatever he could to battle the disease. He had a lump removed and went through both chemo and radiation therapy. "In the end, the treatments actually made the cancer worse and he died sooner, but he was so determined, he couldn't just sit back and let it kill him slowly."

The ordeal was difficult for the entire family. "I don't think young people understand what something like this does to those around them," says Diane. "Through it all, James' thoughts were with his brother and sister and me and his dad. He was so worried about us."

Ironically, just before his diagnosis, James established what was going to be a first annual event to raise money for cancer research. At the time, his aunt was dying of lung cancer, and for years he had witnessed his mother's disfigured face from the removal of a carcinoma on her forehead. "It was a three day punk rock concert he called Champs de Reves, and it was pretty successful for a first attempt," Diane says proudly. "He had cancer himself at the time of the concert, he just didn't know it."

Diane wants others to learn from her son's all too early death. She says that James used to lie in the sun to get a tan, and she recalls him having had a couple of bad burns as a teen. "When I see people, even his friends, still lying on the beach sun bathing, it gives me the shivers," she says. "Young people have to understand that the tan they think is beautiful today will either kill or disfigure them – the risks are just too great."

"No bird soars too high if he soars with his own wings."

- *William Blake*