



Ford Helps Pediatric Cancer Foundation Build Dreams, Hope

Chattanooga, Tennessee-based Austin Hatcher Foundation for Pediatric Cancer helps young cancer survivors heal, discover hope and a future

In summer 2006, Dr. Jim Osborn and his wife Amy Jo welcomed their newborn son, Austin Hatcher, into the world. Within weeks, their bright, cuddly baby boy began to show signs of an illness, and days later, they would learn he had inoperable brain cancer. Just two weeks later, young “Hatch” died in his father’s arms. Devastated, the couple decided to honor their son by helping other parents of children stricken with cancer – and through their loss, the Austin Hatcher Foundation for Pediatric Cancer was born.

They registered the charity the following December with the mission to help raise awareness of pediatric cancer and to provide support for families struggling to cope with its effects and treatment. Leveraging Jim’s experience as an orthopedic surgeon guided them to a holistic approach to supporting cancer survivors – healthy lifestyle education, psycho-oncology and diversionary therapy coupled with industrial arts as a form of reparative therapy.

“One of the things that happens to kids undergoing chemo or radiation therapy is they lose dexterity, so they need occupational therapy to help restructure their sensing,” said Jim. “Diversionary therapy is exactly what it sounds like. It gives you something fun to distract you from the things going on.”

As longtime motorsports enthusiasts, Jim and Amy Jo turned to their friends at SEMA and the racing community to help them create the Hatcher Foundation’s Education Advancement Center. The group includes professional therapists, arts and crafts programs, and an automotive program, where kids can take part in building custom show cars.

“We merged motorsports with therapy in an effort to make recovery fun and not sterile,” said Jim. “There’s a lot of science and amazing technology in both the recovery therapy and motorsports industries, so with a little adaptation, they work very well together to improve recovery and long-term quality of life.”

Hatcher Foundation kids customize a Ford Explorer

This past summer Ford donated a brand-new 2019 Ford Explorer Sport to the Austin Hatcher Foundation for the kids to customize into an eye-catching show vehicle. The high-performance Explorer will be part of the Ford display at this year’s SEMA show in Las Vegas. It features a custom leather interior, performance engine upgrades, a custom outdoor theme body wrap, Yakima rooftop rack and kayak mounts.

“Some kids got to work on the upholstery, some on the racks and some on the lights,” said Johnathan Myren, Austin Hatcher Foundation’s Industrial Arts Director. “It serves as a diversion from the things they’re going through, and we see progress in terms of their cognitive function and fine motor skills.”

A number of aftermarket suppliers donated parts and services for the build, including BFGoodrich®, Yakima, RIGID® lights, Paragon Wheels, Borla® Exhaust, Hypertech, Traxda and Wizards Products. Wastegate Technologies and Wrap Artists created and installed the custom wrap, with Top Notch Customs LLC and Fully Loaded Interiors providing powder coating and custom leather interior.

“I have to thank Ford Motor Company for allowing us to participate in this project,” said Jim. “It’s been awesome to see the kids working on this, and to hear the excitement in their voices when they finally got to see the finished product.”

After SEMA, the Hatcher Foundation plans to use the Explorer to support its Healthy Lifestyles program and later will auction it off to help fund survivor support programs.

To learn more about the Austin Hatcher Foundation for Pediatric Cancer, click [here](#).

As America's favorite large SUV, learn more about the 2019 Ford Explorer [here](#).

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