

## Walk unites community, rekindles hope

By Naima Ford

A family can know the dramatic effects of childhood cancer all too well. Once a year the Childhood Cancer Foundation of Southern California makes sure that the community knows those effects as well through the Brianna Cadman Memorial Kids Walk.

September 11 was the twelfth time the foundation has sponsored the walk. It was a one-and-a-half-mile walk from the foundation's office through Loma Linda. Almost 400 individuals participated, many of them have been touched by cancer personally.

"It was just amazing," said Armida Kersey, executive director of the foundation.

The walk takes place in the morning as families gather in what is both an emotional and celebratory event. Families of children who have passed away due to cancer are able to honor their child in a very public way. For families with children who survived it is a way to celebrate that victory. And for families and individual who were not directly affected by can-



IECN PHOTO COURTESY CCFSC

The 12th Annual Brianna Cadman Memorial Kids' Walk on Sunday brought families of children with cancer together with the community. Pictured here is Team Julieta at the beginning of the walk.

cer it is a way to support the families and the foundation.

The mission of the foundation is to help families of children with cancer with non-medical concerns.

They give families help during an

experience that is scary and unfamiliar to most.

"They incorporate the whole family in the event because they understand that it's not just one person who is experiencing cancer. It's the whole family," said Louise Ramirez, parent of a 9-year-old who was diagnosed with leukemia. The walk was named for a 12-year-old girl who died from cancer in 1999. Her hopeful, fighting spirit is what the walk tries to rekindle and honor in everyone who participates.

The walk is also the foundation's biggest fundraiser. Participants enter as teams and work to raise money from family and the community.

The money raised is used to continue to support families monetarily.

This year they raised \$12,000 for their work.

The foundation will also be having a wine tasting fundraiser event from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 1 at the historic Hofer Ranch in Ontario. There will be a live band, food competition and live and silent auctions.

For more information about



IECN PHOTO COURTESY CCFSC

The walk was also a time to celebrate young cancer survivors. Pictured here is six-year-old survivor Micheal Valle and his family.

Childhood Cancer Foundation of So Cal call (909) 558-3419 or go to [www.ccfso-cal.org](http://www.ccfso-cal.org).