

DOMINIC'S STORY

Hello everyone, my name is Dominic Hannon and I am the parent of a burn survivor - my son Brayden Warnock Hannon.

Brayden was five years old while trying to cook at the stove his t-shirt caught on fire which led to burns over 45% of his body. Brayden is now 11 years old and as most or all of you are aware there has been a long road travelled with recovery and surgeries and that road is still being travelled.

I have written this to talk about two things in particular.

First, through Brayden's recovery we have both had the privilege of attending the Burn Support Group Charitable Trust Camp Awhi. This camp has provided amazing opportunities for our children such as confidence and self esteem building while also giving the children the chance to be with other survivors like themselves. I could go on and on about the benefits of this amazing camp and the impact it has on our children but it has also in my time attending had an impact on the parents who attend. I have met some amazing parents of survivors and heard some amazing stories at these camps which brings me to the next thing I would like to tell you all about.

This year I was privileged enough to be asked by the Burn Support Group Charitable Trust to attend alongside two lovely ladies - Jan Steele and Nikki Boucher and burns survivor Andrew Cameron, the Phoenix Society World Burns Congress in Anaheim, America during a week in October 2014. Wow, wow, wow what an amazing experience. The survivors I met, the courageous stories I heard of people living life despite what they have been through while surviving their burn injuries. I mean it's hard to find words to really describe how much of an amazing experience this was. The WBC is made up of different workshops, discussion groups and inspirational speakers sharing their amazing stories of survival and triumphs in life.

For me personally, what I got out of the WBC was forgiveness and learning to move forward. For a long time I blamed Brayden's mother for his injuries as she left him unattended when he was burnt. But, after attending the WBC and talking to, and most importantly listening to other parents, survivors and other attendees I have come home and forgiven her for her actions that day and have commended her for all the hard work she has done in taking care of our son since that terrible day. Now we are both working together at providing a more positive relationship for our son so he can grow in a more positive way. It is obviously a work in progress, but I sincerely believe that if not receiving the privilege of attending the WBC that the first step may never have been made.

If I am any proof, there is something for everyone to learn and take away from such an amazing event and should the opportunity arise I say to survivors, parents of survivors and other out there this is an experience not to be missed.

I hope that my wee story maybe helps others to get behind things such as the children's camp, and the Burn Support Group Charitable Trust in general. I also hope that in some small way it helps survivors to see what else is out there for them.

Thank you to the Burn Support Group Charitable Trust for the amazing experience I received.

To the survivors - always believe in who you are and keep your head held high!