



Enzo Cornejo, 6, with his mum, Catherina. A fundraiser is being organised to help him get to Boston for treatment. Picture: AAP/Brenton Edwards

SOUTH

Kids' carnival to help Brighton boy Enzo win his battle

Cathryn McLauchlan, CoastCity Weekly Messenger

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ALL Catherina Llontop and Percy Cornejo want is to give their son, Enzo, the brightest future possible in his battle with a rare disorder.

Six-year-old Enzo was born with the rapid-ageing condition progeria, which has no cure and generally reduces life expectancy to about 14 years.

"We never imagined that something like progeria existed, and it's hard," Ms Llontop says.

"We don't know how he'll be tomorrow and it's stressful, but at the same time he makes our lives really happy.

"He's always smiling."

Ms Llontop and Mr Cornejo, of Brighton, started a charity drive in their son's name last year to help get him to Boston, where the Progeria Research Foundation is trialling treatments to stop the ageing process.

They have the backing of Team Enzo, a support group consisting of family members and friends — with its first fundraiser, called Kids Carnival Day, being held in West Croydon this month.

There will be face painting, balloon art, a clown, food stalls, show bags, a craft station and a visit from Mickey and Minnie Mouse.

Money generated will help pay for Enzo and his family's flights and accommodation on their next trip to Boston in 2019, plus other ongoing costs.

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A new treatment trial occurs every two years, though the goal is to find a cure.

In the meantime Enzo is enjoying being in Year 1 at St Mary's Memorial School in Glenelg and learning how to dance on the side.

"We were really proud of him when he started reading, he's doing so well," Ms Lontop says.

"Being a full-time student is something we weren't sure he would be able to do because he gets very tired quickly."

Like many boys his age, Enzo enjoys playing with Lego, making paper planes and puzzles and building tracks for his trains.

Event management business The Wonderland Company and St Elias Antiochian Orthodox Church have helped Team Enzo organise the fundraiser.

Church chairman Peter Kartabani says the church is passionate about providing financial support for Enzo and his family.

It hopes to raise more than \$10,000 at the carnival, with all profits going to Team Enzo.

Details: 17 Herbert Rd, West Croydon on Saturday, March 24 (11am-3pm). Entry free.



Enzo Cornejo, 6, and his mum, Catherina. Picture: AAP/Brenton Edwards
