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# Rockwall Community News: Kids in Shannon Elementary's Pink Ponytail club growing their hair for charity

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**MARCIA CARROLL-BURZAI** Connect with community columnist Marcia Carroll- Burzair at [neighborsgo.com/ blog/rockwallreflections](http://neighborsgo.com/blog/rockwallreflections).

Kindness and compassion are at the heart of the Rachel's Challenge initiative, and students in Rockwall ISD have been nationally recognized for their role at the forefront of the movement.

At Shannon Elementary, members of the Pink Ponytail Kids Club are growing their hair so they can cut it off.

"Pink Heart Funds is a wonderful nonprofit that makes wigs for cancer patients and other victims of debilitating hair loss," said teacher Jaimee Granberry. "Since our emphasis this year is 'others before self,' I decided to pass the idea by my third-graders. When they realized they could donate their hair to a child who didn't have any, they unanimously made a commitment to make it happen."

Inspired by [Rachel](#) Scott, a victim of the April 1999 Columbine High School shootings, the national Rachel's Challenge organization seeks to spread kindness in schools worldwide.

The Pink Ponytail Kids Club was formed in September and has 20 student members who meet monthly to discuss progress, promotion and future plans.

"Our hair has to grow at least 6 inches in order for us to donate it," said McKinlee Reynolds. "But I feel really good being a part of this group because I'm helping others who really need my help."

Students were shown some of the finished wigs and the patients who received them. It made an impact.

"I saw a little girl with no hair and I felt so bad for her," said Olivia Lohmiller. "I wouldn't want that to be me. Now that I am helping, I feel full of hope."

Counselor Fonn Lee says that building character and compassion is an important part of education.

"Our Kindness and Compassion Club has 60 student members, third through sixth grade, with each grade level working on their own project," she said. "We have the Pink Ponytail Kids Club, we're also raising money for victims in [Haiti](#), and last Christmas, we provided presents and food for 10 families in need."

"The neat part about doing Rachel's Challenge and the kindness and compassion initiative is that each school in the district is able to tailor the program for their school. As an educator and a parent, it's very hard to reach a person's mind before you reach their heart. Once you reach the heart, the other naturally follows; it's all about building positive relationships."

The Pink Ponytail cut-a-thon will be at 2 p.m. May 14 in the school cafeteria.

"We are looking for local stylists to donate their time to cut and style the hair of each member," said Lee. "If you can come support us, we'd be most appreciative."

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