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Progeria Research Foundation Launches Global Awareness Campaign to “Find the Other 150” Undiagnosed Children with Fatal Rapid-Aging Disease

Campaign to raise awareness of Progeria symptoms among medical professionals, parents and caretakers

BOSTON, MA (October, 2009) – The Progeria Research Foundation (PRF) announced today the launch of a global Progeria awareness campaign, “Find the Other 150.” This campaign will drive the search for unidentified children with the fatal, rapid-aging disease, Progeria, in the Americas, Europe, Russia, Asia and Africa. PRF has partnered with global communications experts to raise awareness of the disease among both the general public and global medical communities in hopes of identifying these undiagnosed children.

Progeria, also known as Hutchinson-Gilford Progeria Syndrome (HGPS), is a rare, fatal genetic condition characterized by the appearance of accelerated aging in children. Symptoms of Progeria include growth failure, loss of body fat and hair, aged-looking skin, stiffness of joints, hip dislocation, generalized atherosclerosis, cardiovascular (heart) disease and stroke. There are 52 known children with Progeria in 29 countries around the world, but statistically, scientists believe that there are approximately 150 additional unidentified children with this condition. Efforts to find these children will ultimately allow PRF to provide them with the medical services and unique care they need.

“Our goal is to find these children as quickly as possible so we can educate their families and health-care providers on the latest in Progeria research and treatments. We are excited to launch this campaign with GlobalHealthPR because their global reach will help us spread awareness to a worldwide audience,” said Audrey Gordon, President and Executive Director of PRF.

This disease hits close to home for Gordon and her sister, PRF Medical Director Dr. Leslie Gordon. Dr. Gordon's son was diagnosed with Progeria more than a decade ago, and the family has since dedicated their lives to finding a treatment and cure for the disease.

"As a fellow parent of a child with Progeria, I don't want anyone else to feel helpless in diagnosing and treating their child," says Gordon. "The 150 campaign will allow me to provide these children with life-changing treatments and connect them with local medical professionals and other families of children with Progeria."

If someone you know or treat has Progeria-like characteristics, please contact The Progeria Research Foundation at www.findtheother150.org for resources that will help to provide them the best treatment possible.

The Progeria Research Foundation (PRF) was established in 1999 to find the cause, treatment and cure for Progeria – a rapid aging disease that causes children to die from heart disease or stroke at an average age of 13. In the past 10 years, research conducted in partnership with PRF has identified the gene that causes Progeria and identified a possible treatment for children with Progeria. PRF is now funding the first-ever clinical trial, currently underway at Children's Hospital Boston. To learn more about Progeria and what you can do to help, please visit progeriaresearch.org

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