



NeKai Williams is a typical 11 year old little girl who loves to write stories, draw, play soccer, listen to music, sing, hang out with her family and friends, and spend time in Prince William Sound commercial fishing with her Grandma and Uncle. NeKai is a cheerful and happy girl with a sense of humor that always keeps her family and friends laughing and on their toes. What is not typical is the disease that is attacking her young body which is extremely painful at times. NeKai was diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JA) at only five years old and has been living with this disease since she was 18 months old. Her JA started just in her toes and knees and is now in her feet, ankles, knees, hips, hands, wrists and left side of her jaw.

In NeKai's short 11 years, she has seen more doctors, and had more treatments than most will have in a lifetime. To help her function on a day to day basis, NeKai has to take several medications; two of which are injections twice a week. According to her mom, Jenn, NeKai takes them like the rock star with rarely a fuss. This year we are honoring her struggle and willingness to share her story. NeKai doesn't like to let people know she has JA and wants to be treated like everyone else, but she also wants to raise awareness of this debilitating disease so people can understand what she and thousands of other children go through every day.