



New Look

By Jane McBride
(Based on a true story)

"Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good" (Alma 37:37).

Nick tried to listen to his teacher as she wrote numbers on the whiteboard. But the two boys whispering in front of him kept distracting him.

"Did you see Nick?" a boy whispered. "He's got big bald spots all over his head!"

"Yeah," another said. "He looks like my grandpa."

The boys laughed quietly.

Nick touched his head and rubbed one of his many bald spots. His face got hot from embarrassment. He sank lower in his seat, trying to hide. He wanted to

disappear. He hated when classmates talked about his bald spots.

Nick was losing his hair because he had alopecia. That's a condition that makes people's hair fall out.

Most days Nick liked school. But on days like today, he couldn't help feeling sad and embarrassed. After class, he put on his baseball cap and quietly walked through the hallway.

He wished he could call Mom to take him home. But first he'd have to go see the school nurse and tell her he couldn't stay at school. And telling her that his feelings

had been hurt probably wasn't a good enough reason. Even if she *did* say he could go home, he knew his mom wouldn't let him. Alopecia made his hair fall out, but it didn't make him sick, and it wasn't contagious.

It did make him sad, though. After dinner that night, Nick felt tears stinging his eyes when he told Mom and Dad what the kids in math class had said.

"I know I shouldn't listen when they make fun of me," he said. "But sometimes it really hurts."

Mom put her arm around his shoulder. "I hope you know we love you no matter what. And so do your Heavenly Parents. Why don't we say a prayer and ask Heavenly Father what to do?"

"And we can fast about it on Sunday," Dad added.

The next day, Nick met up with his friend Seth when he got to school. Seth was frowning.

"I heard what those guys said about you yesterday," Seth told him. "Don't listen to them. I think you're cool, with or without hair!"

Nick grinned. "Thanks!"

Seth was Nick's best friend. They went to church together too. When Nick first found out he had alopecia, he had told Seth. And Seth didn't treat him any differently.

"My family is going to fast on Sunday to figure out what I should do about my hair," Nick said. "You can too if you want."

Seth nodded. "Sure!"

On Sunday, Nick and his family fasted about what



Nick should do. After they said a prayer together, Nick got a warm, peaceful feeling.

He had his answer.

"My hair is falling out more than ever," Nick told his parents. "And I'm tired of trying to hide it with my baseball cap." He took a deep breath. "I want to shave my head."

Mom and Dad smiled at him.

"I think that's a great idea,"

Dad said.

With Dad's help, Nick shaved his head the next morning. When

he saw his bald head in the mirror, his eyes widened. He looked so different! He ran his fingers over his bald head and laughed at how funny it felt.

When he got to school, a few kids gave him funny looks, but most of them liked his new look.

Seth thought it looked awesome. "Your head looks so cool!"

From that day on, Nick focused on doing his best in school, playing football, and serving as a deacon. Sometimes he still heard some kids talk about his bald head, but he didn't let it bother him. It didn't matter what other people said about him. He knew that Heavenly Father, his family, and his friends loved him, bald head and all. And that's all that truly mattered. ●

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