

Wheelchair Costumes Transcript

Ryan Weimer: Normally there's this awkwardness around disability. But with that costume on there, that changed how people saw my son. They saw him first before they saw his disability. It just helps break down that barrier. 'Magic Wheelchair' is a non-profit that builds epic costumes for amazing kiddos in wheelchairs.

Magic Wheelchair started when my son was three years old. Halloween rolled around and he wanted to be a pirate. We were new to the whole disabilities and wheelchair thing. We didn't know anything about spinal muscular atrophy. I saw him sitting in his wheelchair and [thought] 'Ah, we could dress him up as a pirate – be a pirate in a wheelchair. Let's ... Let's build a ship.'

We have made probably about 40 different costumes. We have teams right now, all over the country. We have a team in France and [are] working on a team in Australia. We're just gonna (going to) keep on boarding teams cos (because) we wanna (want to) build year round.

It's hard to build for people that are in wheelchairs. But it ultimately starts with the kid, it's whatever they want to be and then we make it a reality.

Halloween was kind of our initial push, but we're seeing like Comic Con, right? I mean, what's cool about that community of CosPlay – that's a very supportive community. The cold reality of childhood diseases are some of them won't be around for next Halloween, so let's find something that we can do while they're here with us, so they have these ... they have these great memories and that their ... their families have memories when they're gone. It's almost like a cure for the day cos (because) they don't see the wheelchair, they just see these amazing kids, and it bridges gaps and overcomes that awkwardness that we have in society. They're ... star of the show. It's awesome to see.

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