

## **All About Alopecia – Draft Factsheet for age 6 and under**

This factsheet is designed for children aged 6 and under (and their parents to help them read through the content). We've kept the messages as simple as possible for this age group.

### **What is alopecia?**

Alopecia is a condition that causes hair to fall out.

### **How do I say alopecia?**

Alopecia sounds like this – “al-o-pee-sha”.

### **Am I poorly?**

No, having alopecia doesn't mean you are poorly. You are just fine! 😊

### **Why do I have alopecia?**

We do not know why some children and grown ups get alopecia but we do know there are lots of people with alopecia all over the world.

### **What can I do if I think other children are looking at me because I have alopecia?**

Very often, children don't know they are looking and it's easy to stare without meaning to. Give them a smile and that will let them know you have seen they are looking at you.

Remember, people do look more at other people if they are a little different in some way. You might be the first person they've ever seen with alopecia. They might simply think you look a bit interesting (and fabulous!)

### **Can you catch alopecia like chicken pox?**

No, it's not like chicken pox; you didn't catch alopecia from anyone and you can not pass alopecia on to anyone else.

## **How can I explain my alopecia to my friends if they ask?**

*You could say:*

“I have alopecia. It just means my hair falls out” or

“I’m not poorly. Alopecia only affects my hair.”

## **What if other children are unkind to me because I have alopecia?**

Tell a teacher, parent or grown-up if someone is unkind to you about your alopecia. Some people can be mean with their words at times but it is NEVER OK to tease or bully others for any reason. Most children are very kind 😊

## **What can I do if I feel sad because of my alopecia?**

We all feel sad sometimes. It’s ok to feel sad from time to time. It is usually best to share your feelings with others. Perhaps a parent, a teacher or a grandparent can help make you feel less sad.

Or having LOTS OF FUN with friends and family can help us to be happy!

## **Develop a motto to say to yourself when you’re feeling sad**

“I am ok just the way I am”

“I have alopecia but alopecia doesn’t have me!”

“Alopecia doesn’t change who I am. I am still ME!”

## **We are all different!**

Remember, EVERYBODY IS DIFFERENT! None of us are the same as someone else. There is only one of you. We are all unique. It’s what makes the world a fun and interesting place. Think about your friends, family and classmates. They will all be different sizes and shapes. They will have different coloured hair and eyes.

Having alopecia is just one thing that makes us different. Even people with alopecia look different. Some lose a few patches of hair and others lose all of their hair.



## **Alopecia is just a little part of you**

Your alopecia isn't what makes you you! You have your personality. You have things you are good at. You have things you find a bit more difficult. You have family. You have friends. You have favourite things. You have not-so favourite things! You have good jokes. You have bad jokes! There are so much things that make you who you are! Alopecia is just a small part of who you are.

## **Alopecia won't stop you doing anything!**

Alopecia doesn't stop us having fun! It doesn't stop us from playing with our friends and watching our favourite TV shows. It doesn't stop us from eating our favourite foods, dressing up in different costumes and playing our favourite games.

There are people with alopecia who have won Gold medals at the Olympics (Duncan Goodhew in 1980 (ask your grandparents!) and Joanna Rowsell Shand in 2012 & 2016). There are people with alopecia who have played for England in their sports (Jonjo Shelvey (footballer) and Heather Fisher (rugby player)). Perhaps ask an adult to show you photos and videos of these people in action.

## **You are not alone!**

There are MILLIONS of people all over the world with alopecia. You are part of a group of people who have one thing in common: YOU'RE ALL AMAZING!