

# Offering a helping hand

By Juliet McGhie

Help for a young boy battling a brain tumour has come from Tracy Milich, a Stillwater resident and personal development coach.

Rory Gardiner of Dargaville was a fit, healthy and active seven-year-old.

Then early this year he was diagnosed with a brain tumour, and has already had two surgeries, radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

Tracy is offering a screening of Louise Hay's latest DVD 'You Can Heal Your Life' at the upstairs cafe at the Hibiscus Coast Youth Centre on Thursday, May 21 at 7pm.

"There will be a good coin donation, and as the youth centre has kindly donated the use of its cafe, all proceeds will be donated to The Rory Gardiner foundation," she says.

Rory started getting headaches in February, some serious enough to cause vomiting, says mum Leigh Honor. "Following three trips to the doctor and three to Whangarei Hospital, a brain tumour was detected via CT scan on March 17. He was admitted to Auckland Starship Children's Hospital on the same



**Rory Gardiner:** The brave seven-year-old was diagnosed with a brain tumour. He's pictured here with his doctors at Starship Children's Hospital.

day, and three days later had six hours of surgery to remove the main tumour at the base of his brain. The biopsy showed it was a medulla blastoma grade four, a malignant aggressive type of cancer.

"The neurosurgeon said Rory was on a razor's edge, another two weeks and we would have lost him," Leigh says.

An operation to remove a second tumour on his hypothalamus was in April. Rory will now receive radiotherapy and chemotherapy until he is eight.

He has been brave, patient, tolerant and hung in there through scans, intravenous lines, a

drug regime, surgery, blood tests, and a greatly reduced ability to do what he normally does, Leigh says.

"The staff on Ward 26A Neurology are amazed he is only seven," she says. "We are all very proud of him."

The first operation has affected movement on the left side, and his eyes aren't working in tandem, although both are likely to improve with physiotherapy, says father Sean Gardiner. "Treatments following surgery will result in hair loss, nausea, fatigue and a reduced ability to fight viruses and infection. But there is a good chance of full recovery."

Leigh has stopped working to care for him, and Sean is trying to keep the money coming in while helping with Rory's care, and ensuring his older brother Sam, 9, has as normal a life as possible.

Tracy Milich is doing all she can to support Rory and his family, and she hopes many will attend the May 21 fundraising screening at the Hibiscus Coast Youth Centre cafe from 7pm.

■ Information, or to make a donation, visit [www.rorygardiner.co.nz](http://www.rorygardiner.co.nz). To register for the DVD screening of *You Can Heal Your Life*, contact Tracy on 09-428-4615.