Fourteen-year-old hemophiliac, Ryan White, who contracted AIDS from a blood transfusion, returns to class after months of fighting to attend. Still fearful of the disease, parents pull some of his classmates out of school.

Keywords
AIDS, Ryan White, School, Hemophiliac, Precautions, Blood Transfusion, Kokomo, Indiana, School Boycott, Discrimination

Citation
MLA
"Fear of AIDS Persists as Ryan White Returns to School." Jim Cummins, correspondent. NBC Nightly
Transcript

Fear of AIDS Persists as Ryan White Returns to School

TOM BROKAW, anchor:

Forty thousand Americans will get AIDS this year and next, that estimate was made today by the American college of physicians, it called for competent and humane care for all people with AIDS and it urged healthcare workers not to discriminate against them. Yet of course fear of AIDS persists, that’s a fear that Ryan White knows well. It has kept him out of school in Indiana all but one day since he was diagnosed as having AIDS 16 months ago. But today as NBC Jim Cummins reports now, a long legal battle shifted in Ryan’s favor.

JIM CUMMINS, reporting:

Flowers on his way to court, a good omen for Ryan White who had been fighting to go back to school, today a judge said he could.

RYAN WHITE: Oh it’s great, it’s really great.

JIM CUMMINS: The 14-year-old hemophiliac who got AIDS from a blood transfusion went directly to class. The school has taken precautions with Ryan, his own restroom, disposable dinnerware, the school principal said it’s safe.

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL RON COLBY: Well I do not feel that he poses a threat to other children, if I did feel that, I couldn’t live with myself and be here with children.

JIM CUMMINS: But dozens of parents pulled kids out of school when word spread through this small town that Ryan had returned to class. Rita Chandler said 11-year-old Amy would not be back to school as long as Ryan is here.

RITA CHANDLER: It’s emotional for me because I work in these buildings and we have always gone to school here and I don’t want her to be around Ryan because of the AIDS.

AMY, student: If people with chicken pox and measles can’t come why should he?

JIM CUMMINS: There are rumors of a school boycott, and threats of more court action to get Ryan out of school again. It’s been an emotional time for Ryan’s mother too, who’s been waging this fight for almost
a year.
JEANNE WHITE: I couldn’t believe that it’s finally over.
Unidentified Reporter: Do you think it is over?
JEANNE WHITE: I hope so, yeah I think so.
ATTORNEY CHARLES VAUGHAN: I’m happy for Ryan; I’ve never seen a boy try to go to school so hard. Most of them are trying to get out of school. I’m real proud of him, I’ve never seen a fighter like him, he’s just a great young man.
JIM CUMMINS: But Ryan knows that at any time somebody, a judge or a school official, might order him to stay away again. Unless that happens, Ryan plans to stay in class as long as his health permits. Jim Cummins, NBC NEWS, Kokomo, Indiana.