

YOUR CHILD HAS CANCER.

Everyone in the
family needs
some care.



When Your Child Has Cancer

EDUCATIONAL GUIDE FOR PARENTS



wellspring family programming

When a Child
Has Cancer





wellspring family programming
**When a Child
Has Cancer**

Introduction	4
About Childhood Cancer in Canada	6
Telling Our Children	7
You, As a Parent	12
You, As a Couple	14
My Brother or Sister Has Cancer	15
How to Cope	16
Wellspring Resources Available:	
Paeds & Parents Family Counselling	20
Paeds & Parents Group	20
Paeds & Parents Money Matters	21
Paeds & Parents Nourish	22
Wellness Support for Parents	23
Child Care	23
Suggested Reading List:	
Siblings of Children with Cancer	24
Younger Children with Cancer	26
Teens with Cancer	27
Parents who have a Child with Cancer	29
Educators who have a Student with Cancer	30

Introduction

“Your child has cancer”.

These are words that parents hope they never hear.

When a child is diagnosed with cancer, it is life-altering for the entire family. As parents, it feels shocking and overwhelming. You may feel unsure about how to support your children, what is going to happen next, and how you are going to manage your own uncertainty and fear. Children with cancer suddenly have their lives turned upside in a whirlwind of hospital visits, tests and procedures. Siblings reel from the impact it has on their lives.

At Wellspring, we want to provide your family with support from initial diagnosis and throughout the illness and aftercare.

Many questions arise when a child is diagnosed with cancer:

For your children:

- How is it even possible that our child has cancer?
- How do we talk about cancer with our children? How can we expect our child with cancer to feel and behave?
- What about our other children? How can we be sure we are meeting their needs?

For you as a parent:

- How can we expect to feel as parents as we go through this experience?
- How do I support my children when I am struggling with my own emotions?
- How do we manage this with all of our other responsibilities in our lives?

For your friends and community:

- How do we tell people what is happening?
- How can we get help?



This booklet will help you by offering best practice and good advice on how to talk with, and provide support to, your children.

In addition to this booklet, Wellspring can offer you access to professionals who specialize in family support and specially designed programming for families dealing with pediatric cancer.



wellspring family programming

When a Child Has Cancer

About Childhood Cancer in Canada

“When they told me what was wrong with my daughter, that she had cancer and would need treatment right away, I thought they must have made a mistake, and that this must be about another child, another family. It seemed impossible that this could be happening to us.”

It seems to go against logic that children who are just beginning their lives are diagnosed with cancer which threatens their lives. And yet, according to Childhood Cancer Canada, every year approximately 1,500 children are diagnosed with cancer in Canada, and at any point in time over 4,000 children are receiving treatment for cancer or follow-up care in Ontario. Some families have known for some time that something is wrong with their child and have been struggling to find out what is going on, but are still shocked to find out it is cancer. For other families, the diagnosis is sudden and unexpected. Always, it is heartbreaking.

Children’s cancers differ greatly from adult cancers with children most often diagnosed with leukemia, tumors of the brain and nervous system, the lymphatic system, kidneys, bones and muscles. As parents, the first step is understanding what kind of cancer your child has and what the steps are for treating it.



Telling Our Children



Should we use the word cancer?

When a child is diagnosed with cancer, they quickly know they are sick. From the time of diagnosis, things usually proceed at a very quick pace. For some parents, their child was part of the conversation when they learned it is cancer. For others, the child was not made aware and parents need to help their child understand what is going on. This brings up the important question of whether or not to use the word cancer.

“We are just going to tell him he is sick.”

- When parents are reluctant to tell their child they have been diagnosed with cancer, it is usually because they feel protective, which is entirely natural and understandable. A primary role of parents is to protect their children, and it can therefore seem strange to share information with them that may upset and scare them. Also, the word ‘cancer’ may not have meaning if the children are young and they have not heard it before.

“So, then, why would we use the word ‘cancer’?”

- Children who have cancer will be asked to undergo many tests, procedures, treatments and hospital visits or stays in the hospital. It is nearly impossible to shield them from the word cancer because it will be all around them.
- When the information is shared by you, rather than having them overhear it from others and learn about it “by mistake”, it helps establish trust that they will be included in conversations that are important to them.
- When we use general terms like “sick”, it is very difficult for children to understand the difference between colds and flus and what is happening to them. They might generalize that others could catch it, or that they are contagious, or that it will go away in a few days.
- Although sharing the diagnosis by using the word ‘cancer’ does indeed bring up worries and concerns, it also opens a door for communication and discussion so that children to identify and talk about their feelings. When we tell children that they have cancer, it lets them know the appropriate medical term and conveys in a helpful way that it is different from other illnesses they may have had. It can also help you inform them that cancer differs from child to child and that what they hear about another cancer may not relate to theirs.
- When children are not informed appropriately, they tend to fill in the missing information using their imaginations which may, in fact, be even more worrisome than the reality.
- Even very young children can have the word cancer used as it becomes part of their language acquisition and the meaning you apply as parents comes directly from you. Treatment of childhood cancers and follow up visits will go on for several years so even if a child is diagnosed before they are two, they will likely be attending oncology clinics as they mature.
- Brothers and sisters also benefit from understanding what is happening with their sibling as it has a tremendous impact on their lives too, and they do better knowing why everyone is having to change their lives so dramatically.



How do we tell our child that they have cancer?

Here are some suggestions to help you talk about cancer with your children:

- Prepare by talking first to another adult about what you will say. This allows you to feel the emotions and become familiar with your own words so that you feel more in control of your emotions when speaking with your child.
- Stick to simple and basic language, keeping your sentences short. The goal is to provide with enough information without overwhelming them.
- Allow your child to hear the information and for it to sink in. Some children may have an emotional reaction, some may go off and play or stay by themselves. Any of these reactions is very normal and allows children to take the time they need to adjust to the information.
- Encourage your children to ask questions and also to know that they can ask them at any time, even if they are tough questions or they think it sounds silly.
- Children may have fears and concerns. It is very tempting to rush in with reassurance, but first, try listening and really make sure you understand their feelings.
- It is helpful to be hopeful but also realistic. Embed the information in reassurance, such as “The treatment may not make you feel well, but there are medicines and things we can do to help you feel better.” “Treatment is going to take some time, but we will be there with you each step of the way”.
- It is not unusual for children to re-ask the same questions or appear to not have heard. It can be difficult to absorb the information. Also, sometimes, they are hopeful that they have misheard and that this is not really happening. Be prepared to repeat yourself, and be patient as your child may revisit information already provided.
- For siblings, it is helpful to know the same information about the child’s diagnosis but also to talk about how they will be affected in the next short while.
- Books can be helpful in helping children understand about what cancer is and what treatments are often necessary. See the recommended readings section, and consider sitting side-by-side and reading a book about cancer with your child. The words used may help your child hear the information in a new way, and might result in a new opportunity to talk with your child and answer questions.



How might my child react?

“All of a sudden, my life changed. No school, no activities, and everything suddenly having to do with cancer. It didn’t even feel like it was real at first.”

A cancer diagnosis is a shock to a child, who likely would not have thought that this was a possibility. Children can react with disbelief or even denial. They may appear sad about the losses that they incur as a result of their diagnosis and all of the things that they start to miss out on. They may react with anger about why this is happening to them, may feel that having cancer is unfair, and may fear having to undergo difficult treatments. They may feel guilty about their feelings or worry about having caused it to happen in some way. Older children may worry about the possibility of treatment not working, or even death. They may feel anxious about procedures and tests and treatments especially when they are unsure how they will feel. All of these are common emotional responses for children with cancer. Children of different ages may react somewhat differently based on the age and developmental stage:

Babies and Toddlers:

- Cancer is not a word that children understand at this age. They will be concerned about the “here and now” and what they can see and how it is affecting them. They will react when separated from a parent. They will react to tests and procedures. The closer they are to two years of age, the more they will need to be informed of what is going to happen and what to expect. Honesty is best, so they learn to trust that you mean what you say. It is not unusual to see children at this age become more “clingy” and there may be some temporary regression in the way they behave.

Preschoolers:

- Children in this age group can better understand illness but it is unlikely that the word cancer will have meaning for them unless they have had cancer in their immediate circle before. There will likely be confusion between their cancer and other forms of illness like a cold or flu and may think that they are contagious. They may react to changes in their routine with frustration and anger. It is unlikely that they will grasp the significance of their diagnosis other than as a disruption to their current routine. They can be prone to “magical thinking” and can believe both that something that they did caused it to happen or that they can “wish” it away. Children at this age benefit from reassurance that nothing anyone did or said caused them to have cancer. They benefit from being informed about what to expect and to be told honestly how procedures will feel.

School Age Children:

- Children who are in grade school will usually know about cancer as a word and may understand it is an illness or disease but may still have many misconceptions about it. They will likely react to separation from parents, and being absent from school and from their usual activities. Many feel isolated from friends and may experience feelings of anger and sadness about their diagnosis and have a sense of “missing out”. Children in this age group benefit from understanding basic details about their illness, and why treatments are necessary. They may be concerned about surviving and getting better.

Teens:

- Most teens grasp the significance of a cancer diagnosis. They may appear to disbelieve the diagnosis and respond by withdrawing or clinging depending upon their coping styles. They may be frustrated and angry about having cancer and the impact it is having on their school and social life. They may voice feeling upset about body image or appearance issues related to symptoms for the cancer and their treatment. Often, teens will feel concerned about the possibility of treatment not working or possibly dying from the cancer. It is a confusing time for most teens who are in the stage of increasing their independence from their parents but then suddenly are thrust into dependence again.



You, As a Parent Who Has a Child With Cancer

“Overnight, your world changes. All the balls you had up in the air, making your family life “work”, can feel like they come tumbling down in a moment after the diagnosis.”

The diagnosis of childhood cancer represents the beginning of a time of distress for parents. There is a tremendous impact on your life as you begin needing to:

- Coordinate and schedule healthcare appointments and hospital visits and stays
- Travel to and from the hospital
- Witness and, often, need to participate in your child’s medical treatments, many of which are painful and distressing to the child
- Update healthcare providers on your child’s medical condition
- Update family and friends on your child’s medical status
- Re-organize old roles and create new roles within your family
- Provide emotional support to your partner and all of your children
- Deal with behavioral and emotional challenges of your children
- Try to manage your own emotions, such as fear of your child dying, treatment not working, cancer coming back; there may be feelings of guilt , and possibly anxiety and/or depression
- Adapt to new family routines
- Care for your children’s well being
- Manage medications
- Manage medical emergencies and treatment side effects
- Take time off of work or leave work, leading to a reduction in income and creation or exacerbation of financial stress
- Fill out cancer-related paperwork
- Learn about your child’s cancer and its treatment
- Learn how to navigate the healthcare system and access resources
- Attend to the educational needs of all of your children
- Learn to advocate for your child
- Arrange childcare
- Be vigilant
- Care for your child if they are in the hospital (e.g., bathing, entertaining)
- Manage your child’s changing nutritional needs
- Manage tasks within your home, such as cooking and cleaning.





How might you feel?

It is a tremendous shock to find out your child has a life-threatening illness. Parents describe feeling overwhelmed, afraid and unsure, especially at the time of diagnosis and early days in treatment.

- You may have a sense of things feeling unreal and perhaps question if it is really happening.
- Some parents voice that they feel guilty about not being able to protect their child from what they are going through.
- You may feel isolated and distanced from friends and families both physically and emotionally. Many parents report having difficulty relating to other parents who are not going through a similar situation because their own situations feel so drastically different.
- You may be worried about how you are going to manage emotionally, practically and physically.
- You may feel anxious about treatments and procedures and feel unsure about what to hope for. You may feel fear of the unknown.

You, As a Couple

As couples work together to manage their child's illness, some find that they feel closer and like a "team" and that they have a better understanding of their partner's strengths and flexibility.

Often, however, a diagnosis of cancer in a child can create tremendous challenges for you as a couple. You might find:

- That you feel disconnected from one another physically and emotionally while apart for treatment.
- With all of the attention going to your ill child, your partner may feel lonely or neglected.
- Reassigning roles and sorting out how things will get done in the home and community can be frustrating.
- It can be difficult talking about emotions while dealing with medical issues, and you might have different emotional responses at different times than your partner. This mismatch in couples' response styles, and timing, can cause emotional distance.
- You may disagree about how to discipline or manage problematic behavior from both your ill and well children.
- If there were pre-existing issues between you as a couple that has weakened the bond between you, the diagnosis and all that follows can make this worse.



My Brother or Sister Has Cancer.

What About Me?

When a child is diagnosed with cancer, brothers and sisters are swept up in the impact. The routine and family life they are accustomed to is suddenly uprooted and changed, and continues to change as their sibling moves through the illness. Most siblings are seen to be fairly resilient in the face of cancer in their brother or sister. Nonetheless, there can be considerable impact on siblings, such as:

- School attendance and performance may be affected as their concentration and focus are challenged.
- They may feel sadness, anger, or lonely and left out, or be upset about activities they can no longer attend or do.
- They may worry about their brother or sister, about their parents' functioning and the overall well-being of their family.
- Depending on their age, they may worry that something they did caused the cancer.
- They may feel jealous about the attention being given to their sick sibling.
- They may feel elevated levels of stress.
- They may be asked (or have decided on their own) to take on new roles in the family such as helping out more, taking over for the ill child's role in the home, or providing care to the ill child.
- They may feel loss and loneliness from separation from a parent and/or sibling during hospitalization of the ill child.
- They often report feeling isolated as they rarely know anyone else who has a sibling with cancer and often do not attend hospital visits with their sibling (where they would see other children).
- Of particular note, they may feel angry at the ill sibling for getting sick, and disrupting the lives of the family members, and then feel guilt and shame as a secondary emotion in response to the anger.

All of these reactions and feelings can be normal and expected as a sibling tries to adjust to the changes in his or her life. The challenges can be particularly stressful when their ill brother or sister is hospitalized and/or is experiencing periods of increased symptom distress.

From siblings, you might observe:

- Worries about being separated from family members
- Regressing to behaviors that were previously behind them
- Increased physical complaints of upset stomach or headaches
- Difficulty sleeping
- Difficulty concentrating, focusing or remembering
- Increased irritability
- Acting out in an effort to get attention at school or at home
- Pulling back or withdrawing
- Seeming to "overreact" to things that normally wouldn't bother them
- Going "over and above" other people's expectations and trying to be very well behaved or doing extra chores.

How to Cope

Supporting you

When you take a flight, a flight attendant instructs you, in case of emergency, to put on your own mask before you help your child. The idea is that when we don't look after ourselves, we aren't adequately able to care for our children's needs.

Parents are the most important supporters in the life of a child with cancer. Your child needs you to be as well to the fullest extent possible – emotionally, physically and practically.

Here are some suggestions to help you care for yourself, so you can be there to care for your children:



- Find out all you need about your child's diagnosis and treatment so you feel well informed.
- Connect with other people who also have children with cancer, for support, understanding, sharing information and stories, and feeling less alone.
- Ask for help from your health care team, for you.
- Figure out what would make your life run more smoothly and try to identify what others could do to help you.
- Find time to do things for you and care for yourself.
- Learn new strategies for reducing anxiety and stress.
- Join a support group, or program where there are other parents with a child with cancer.
- See a professional for individual support and counselling to discuss fears, concerns and challenges.
- Anticipate being afraid and sad at times, and having difficult emotions. Don't judge yourself for having honest feelings.

Supporting your relationship

Attending to your relationship while your child is sick can seem secondary, but doing so is an important part of your and your family's wellness.

- Try to recognize the contributions your partner is making since the diagnosis.
- Say thank you to each other for the jobs you are doing.
- Try to give each other respite and opportunities for sleep.
- If possible, try to spend a bit of time together without the children.
- Remember that emotions are raw and give each other latitude.

Supporting your well children

Parents wonder how to support their well children while still tending to their child with cancer. There never seems to be enough time to give everyone what they need. And yet, there are ways that can make a big difference for your well children:

- Talk to them. Make sure they understand, in an age appropriate way, what is happening to their brother or sister. Try to answer any questions they have as honestly and openly as you can.
- Try to let them know what to expect going forward as far as you know, and how it will affect them.
- Listen to them. Try to listen with an open mind when they talk to you about how they feel. Children will often try to start talking about feelings and we can rush to reassure or help guide them to another feeling instead. Try first to really listen and understand, validating how they feel and letting them know they have been heard.
- Prepare them for anything they might hear or see that might be difficult if they are visiting their brother or sister in the hospital.
- Try to keep to their usual routine and activities, to the great extent possible.
- Whenever possible, allow them to have a say in who looks after them in your absence or takes them to activities.
- Try to carve out a time just for them once in a while.
- Reassure them that you are looking after yourself and then make sure that you do!

Supporting your child with cancer

- Let your child talk to you about their feelings and reactions to their diagnosis, treatment and all that it brings.
- Help them understand what is happening to their body and the purpose of their treatments. Prepare them honestly about what to expect for procedures, tests and treatments. If you are not sure, ask your healthcare team for clarification.
- Help them maintain their friendships by staying in touch with friends, and helping friends know how to stay in touch with your child.
- Allow them to play an active role in decision making whenever possible.
- If they are challenged by a particular symptom or challenge, reach out to the health care team or to a professional who is trained in supporting children with cancer
- Provide your child with opportunities to meet with other children with cancer to help them feel connected and understand that they are not the only one.
- Look after you. When parents look after themselves, they are helping their children.

A special note about families

When you are a single parent, it can be especially difficult to manage a child's diagnosis of cancer. Your support network becomes even more important and it is imperative that you find support for you.

When parents are divorced and the relationship is strained, communication regarding caring for the child with cancer and their siblings can be difficult. Try to set aside any issues you may have as a couple and concentrate on what is in the best interest of the children.

Talk to a member of your health care team, or Wellspring's Family Counsellor, about your specific circumstances and suggestions on how to manage.



Letting others help

Families tell us that from the moment they started sharing that their child was diagnosed with cancer, people begin asking if there is anything they could do to help. Initially most parents say "no", or "keep us in your prayers" or similar statements. At the beginning, it is hard to imagine what others can do to be of assistance. It is important to note that every family has a different comfort level of how much they want others involved in their lives. That being said, it can be incredibly challenging to "do it all" and often others want to help so they can do something for your family that makes a difference.

Consider the following ways that others can be helpful:

- You can pick a close friend or family member who is good at organizing things to manage a webpage and keep it updated with your child's progress. This cuts down on phone calls to you and having to repeat yourself over and over which can be exhausting. Some helpful websites for this kind of information sharing are caringbridge.org | carepages.com | www.mycancercircle.lotsahelpinghands.com
- Childcare
- Rides for your well children to attend activities
- Providing food. It is helpful (although it can feel awkward) to ask for foods that you think your family will eat. You don't want to end up with a freezer full of meat dishes for a family who is vegetarian. www.takethemameal.com is a helpful website for organizing meals
- Outdoor or indoor cleanup
- Grocery shopping
- Keeping you company or providing rides to treatment
- Arranging playdates with your children
- Running errands.



What do I do if any of my children seem to be really struggling?

Parents often struggle with knowing when their child may need additional support above what they are offering at home. As noted, most children will demonstrate changes in emotional responses, behaviours and routines and may regress especially at the time of diagnosis. Often children will “bounce back” over time and learn new ways of coping. Some signs your child may need additional support are:

- Struggling at school when they have not typically been struggling.
- Extreme changes in behaviour such as acting out, not sleeping well or sleeping too much, drastic change in eating, isolating themselves.
- Showing a lack of interest in activities they used to like.
- Children who have struggled with emotional wellness or experienced behavioural issues prior to the diagnosis may show an increase in these areas and parents and children may need additional support strategies.
- Any sign or indication that they may hurt themselves or someone else (in which case, parents should seek immediate medical/mental help support through their family doctor or hospital).

If you have concerns about any of your children, your child's hospital and Wellspring have staff to support you and your family.

Wellspring Resources Available

Paeds & Parents Family Counselling

Each Wellspring Centre in the Greater Toronto Area has a professional who is specially trained in helping families through a child's illness. The Family Counsellor can provide you with short-term counselling to help you to prepare for talking to your children, support your family's unique needs and ensure that you have ongoing support for you and your children. After a referral is made to the Family Counsellor, you will be contacted quickly, usually within one business day, to set up a time to meet. In the event that you or your family need longer term support, the Family Counsellor can help make a referral to a community support service best suited to your needs.

For information on programs for parents and children outside of Greater Toronto Area, please contact your local Wellspring centre.



Paeds & Parents Group

(Supported by AMPed for Life)

Wellspring offers a monthly group for parents of children with cancer and their children. While parents meet with a professional facilitator for support and networking, children with cancer and their siblings meet in their own professionally-led therapeutic play-based group especially designed to meet their emotional, social and physical needs. Topics for children help them learn to express feelings, increase and improve social interaction with others, and feel connected to others who understand what they are going through. The theme each month is unique so that if a child is too unwell or unable to attend a particular group, they will not feel like they have "missed out".

Paeds & Parents Money Matters Financial Advice Clinic

Cancer has a cost, especially for parents when a child has cancer. Families that were two-income almost always drop down to one while a parent takes a leave from work to care for the sick child and attend treatment appointments. Wellspring's Money Matters program provides access to financial experts to review assets and remaining income and advise on ways of shoring up while family income is temporarily reduced.



For information on programs for parents and children outside of Greater Toronto Area, please contact your local Wellspring centre.

Paeds & Parents Nourish

Nutrition is often a major concern both during, and following, cancer treatment. Most parents have concerns about what their children are eating and want them to have all the right nutritional components in their diet. When a child is diagnosed with cancer, appetites wane or increase, tastes change due to treatment or symptoms, weight increases or decreases. It becomes increasingly challenging to help your children eat well. Wellspring has designed a special Nourish program aimed at helping you and your children with healthy eating, while still having fun in the kitchen.

For information on programs for parents and children outside of Greater Toronto Area, please contact your local Wellspring centre.



Wellness Support for Parents

Parents are the most important people in the life of a child with cancer. Parents of children with cancer are welcome to attend programming at Wellspring that is focused on wellness and stress reduction, such as meditation, yoga, Tai Chi and Chi Life. Wellness and self-care strategies can be a wonderful way for you to look after yourself so that you have the resources to be the best parent you can be. [Click here](#) to see the Coping Skills programs available to you.



Child Minding

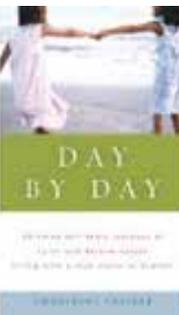
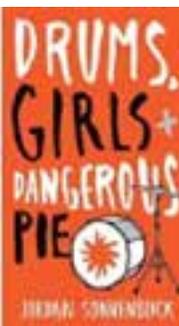
Some Wellspring centres also offer supervised child minding so that parents with young children can attend programs.

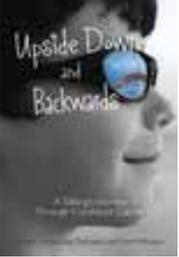
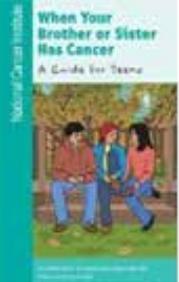


For information on programs for parents and children outside of Greater Toronto Area, please contact your local Wellspring centre.

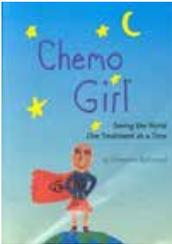
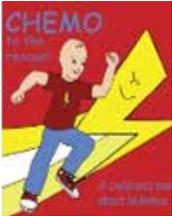
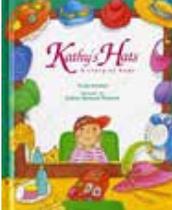
Suggested Reading List for Siblings of Children with Cancer

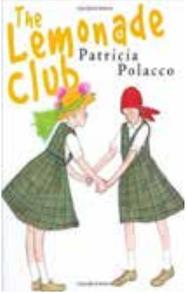
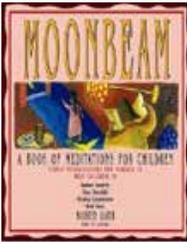
For Siblings of Children with Cancer

	<p>Can I catch cancer? By Christine Thomas Good for explaining cancer to young children regardless of who has it.</p>	
	<p>Day by Day, Children tell their journeys of faith and determination living with a sick sister or brother By Christine Frisbee Stories for parents to understand the feelings and reactions of siblings.</p>	
	<p>Drums, Girls and Dangerous Pie By Jordan Sonnenblick The story of 13 year old Steven whose little brother Jeffrey is diagnosed with cancer. Appropriate for pre-teens and young teens.</p>	<p>Pre-teens and young teens</p>
	<p>Hi, My Name Is Jack By Christina Beall-Sullivan Jack's sister Molly, is chronically ill (not specifically cancer).</p>	<p>Ages 3+</p>

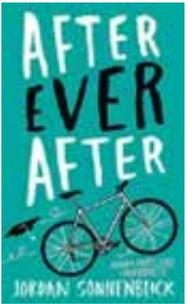
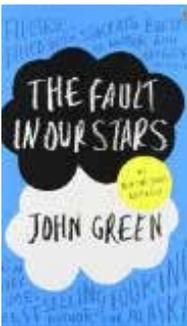
	<p>My Blood Brother By Elizabeth Murphy-Melas Stefan's 7 year old brother Sam has leukemia. Good for both children with cancer and their siblings.</p>	<p>Ages 3+</p>
	<p>Oliver's Story: For "Sibs" of Kids with Cancer By Michael Dodd A young boy named Oliver's little sister is diagnosed with cancer. For young school age children.</p>	<p>Young school age children</p>
	<p>Upside Down and Backwards By Julia Greves Bryce's younger sister is diagnosed with cancer. Appropriate for pre-teens and young teens.</p>	<p>Pre-teens and young teens</p>
	<p>What about me?: When Brothers or Sisters Get Sick By Allan Peterkin For young children when a sibling is ill.</p>	
	<p>When Your Brother or Sister Has Cancer: A Guide for Teens By National Cancer Institute A book put out by the NCI – addresses issues related to being a teen with a sibling who has cancer.</p>	
	<p>Why, Charlie Brown, Why? By Charles Schultz Young Janice is diagnosed with leukemia and Charlie Brown and the Gang are with her through her experience.</p>	<p>Ages 3+</p>

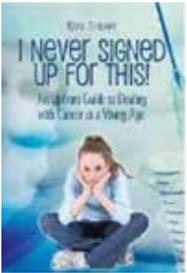
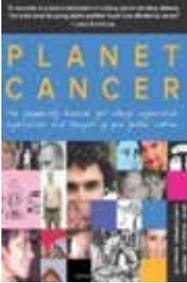
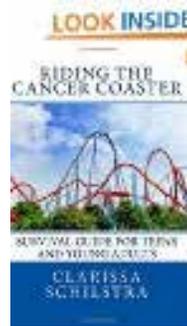
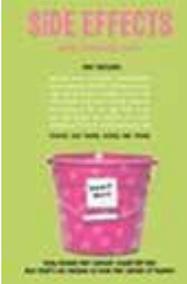
For Younger Children with Cancer

	<p>Chemo Girl: Saving the world one treatment at a time By Christina Richmond</p> <p>A 9 year old girl is diagnosed with cancer and undergoes chemotherapy.</p>	<p>Ages 3+</p>
	<p>Chemo to the Rescue: A children's book about leukemia By Mary Brent</p> <p>5 year old Caitlyn in diagnosed with leukemia and undergoes chemotherapy.</p>	<p>Ages 3+</p>
	<p>The girl who had a big adventure: Cancer, chemo and cupcakes By Stacia Mers and Jane Freund</p> <p>Written by an 8 year old girl diagnosed at 6 with medulloblastoma (a type of brain cancer.)</p>	<p>Ages 4+</p>
	<p>The Great Katie Kate tackles questions about cancer By M. Maitland deLand</p> <p>Answers frequently asked questions by children about cancer through a young girls experience.</p>	<p>Ages 5+</p>
	<p>Imagine What's Possible: Using the Power of Your Mind to Take Control Over Your Life During Cancer By Gary Skole</p> <p>Teaches parents and children how to use visualization techniques to help during treatment and recovery.</p>	
	<p>Kathy's Hats: A Story of Hope By Trudy Krisher</p> <p>Nine year old Kathy has cancer, undergoes chemotherapy and loses her hair.</p>	<p>Ages 3+</p>

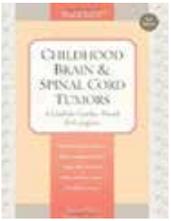
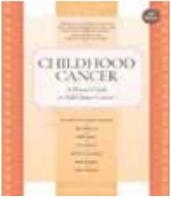
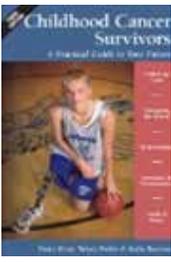
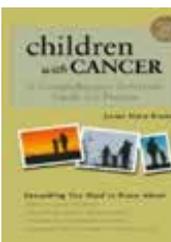
	<p>Lemonade Club By Patricia Polacco Best friends Traci and Marilyn are shocked to find out that Marilyn has leukemia. Good for back to school issues.</p>	<p>Ages 3+</p>
	<p>Moonbeam: A book of meditations for children By Maureen Garth Not specific to cancer but a tool for parents with stories, guided imagery, and meditation.</p>	
	<p>Stevie's New Blood By Kathryn Lilleby An 8 year old boy undergoes a Bone Marrow Transplant.</p>	

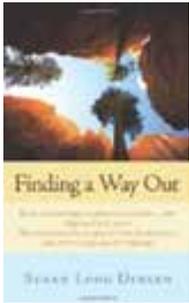
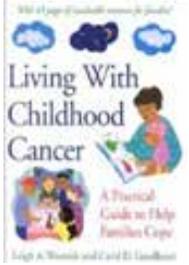
For Teens with Cancer

	<p>After ever after By Jordan Sonnenblick Jeffrey is a teen in remission, fearful of recurrence and trying to live a "normal life". Continuation of Drums, Girls and Dangerous Pie (listed in the <i>Siblings of Children with Cancer</i> section)</p>	
	<p>The Fault in Our Stars By John Green Hazel and Augustus, both teens with cancer meet at a support group. Made into a movie.</p>	

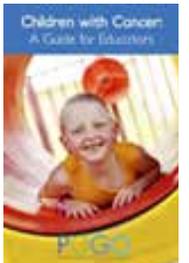
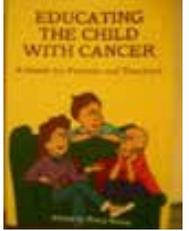
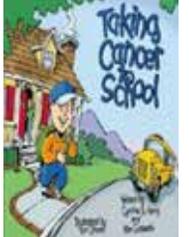
	<p>I Never Signed Up for This: An upfront guide to dealing with cancer at a young age By Katie Strumpf Written by a 25 woman who went through cancer as a teen.</p>	
	<p>Life After Cancer in Adolescence and Young Adulthood: The Experience of Survivorship By Anne Grinyer Written from the perspective of those who had cancer as a teenager or young adult – deals with survivorship issues.</p>	
	<p>Planet Cancer: The Frequently Bizarre Yet Always Informative Experiences and Thoughts of Your Fellow Natives By Heidi Schultz Adams and Christopher Schultz All chapters aimed at issues relevant to teens and young adults.</p>	
	<p>Riding the Cancer Roller Coaster: Survival Guide for Teens and Young Adults By Clarissa Schilstra Written by a now 21 year old student, Clarissa describes undergoing treatment for leukemia that she had as a young child and later recurred as a teen.</p>	
	<p>Side Effects By Amy Goldman Koss A novel about 15 year old Izzy diagnosed with Stage IV hodgkins lymphoma.</p>	

For Parents who have a Child with Cancer

	<p>Alicia's Updates: A Mother's Memoir of Pediatric Cancer By Rene Fesler</p> <p>Written by a mother about what her family went through when her daughter was diagnosed with cancer.</p>	
	<p>Childhood Brain and Spinal Cord Tumors: A Guide for Families, Friends and Caregivers By Tania Shiminski-Maher, Patsy Cullen and Maria Sansalone</p> <p>A practical book that covers medical and emotional aspects of diagnosis and treatment of brain and spinal cord tumours.</p>	
	<p>Childhood Cancer: A Parent's Guide to Solid Tumor Cancers, Second Edition By Honna Janes-Hodder and Nancy Keene</p> <p>A book that walks parents through diagnosis, treatment and coping with solid tumor cancers.</p>	
	<p>Childhood Cancer Survivors: A Practical Guide to Your Future By Nancy Keene, Wendy Hobbie, Kathy Ruccione and Giulio J D'Angio</p> <p>A guide that provides information about survivorship issues including late effects, and emotional impact. Good for both teens, young adults and their parents.</p>	
	<p>Childhood Leukemia: A Guide for Families, Friends and Caregivers By Nancy Keene</p> <p>A book on how to understand leukemia and its treatments and coping with the illness.</p>	
	<p>Children with Cancer, A Comprehensive Reference Guide for Parents By Jeanne Munn Bracken</p> <p>An overview of issues related to childhood cancer written by a parent of a child with a rare form of cancer.</p>	

	<p>Finding a Way Out By Susan Dineen Written by a mother about her son who was diagnosed with cancer at the age of 17.</p>	
	<p>Living with Childhood Cancer: A Practical Guide to Help Families Cope By Leigh Woznick and Carol Goodheart A helpful book for parents who have a child with cancer.</p>	

For Educators who have a Student with Cancer

	<p>Children with Cancer: A Guide for Educators By POGO http://www.pogo.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Interlink-Book-for-Educators_Fall-2013-V1.pdf</p>	
	<p>Educating the Child with Cancer: A Guide for Parents and Teachers By Nancy Keene A book for both educators and parents about childhood cancer and school.</p>	
	<p>Helping Schools Cope with Childhood Cancer By London Health Sciences Centre Children's Hospital http://www.lhsc.on.ca/Patients Families Visitors/Childrens Hospital</p>	
	<p>Taking Cancer to School By Cynthia Henry Max has leukemia and this book is about his experience with living with cancer and going to school. Has helpful resources for educators.</p>	

For more information and program availability,
please contact your local Wellspring centre.

The Paeds and Parents Programs are only available at:

**WELLSPRING BIRMINGHAM GILGAN HOUSE
(OAKVILLE)**
2545 Sixth Line
Oakville, ON L6H 7V9
905.257.1988

Other Wellspring locations include:

**WELLSPRING CHINGUACOUSY
(BRAMPTON)**
5 Inspiration Way
Brampton, ON L6R 0L7
905.792.6480
Toll-free 1.877.907.6480

**WELLSPRING DOWNTOWN
TORONTO**
4 Charles Street East, 4th Floor
Toronto, ON M4Y 1T1
416.961.1928
Toll-free 1.877.499.9904

**WELLSPRING WESTERKIRK HOUSE
(SUNNYBROOK)**
105 Wellness Way
Toronto, ON M4N 0B1
416.480.4440

**Wellspring Family Programs are generously
supported by RBC Insurance.**



Insurance

Charitable Registration # 89272 8940 RR001

wellspring.ca/familyprogramming



wellspring family programming

**When a Child
Has Cancer**