



Guide to Cancer Books for Children/Adolescents available from the NYOH Community Cancer Foundation

Helping Children & Teens Cope When Someone They Love Has a Serious Illness

Vickie Leff and Anne Kelemen

Parent/caregiver guide

Helping children and teens cope is a practical resource for any adult dealing with a serious illness and is close to children or teens. Age related guidelines, word suggestions, helping you understand what to expect from your teen or child are all a part of this useable resource. Created by two clinical social workers who have experience working with adults with serious illness.

My Dad and the Dragon

Montserrat Coughlin Kim

Ages 3-7

My Dad and the Dragon shows what life for all members of a family when a father is diagnosed with cancer. Helpful text and illustrations that normalize emotion, treatment, side effects, and describes the cancer as a dragon

Chemotherapy 101

Chelsey Gomez

Ages 3-11

Bright fun illustrations to explain cancer and treatment. It emphasizes that cancer is not the child's fault and encourages them to ask questions.

Cancer Party

Sarah Olsher

Ages 3-11

Helps families address what cancer is, what treatment involves and the physical impact cancer treatment has on a patient and their child, helps kids understand what to expect, and assures them that cancer isn't their fault nor is it their job to fight it. (Similar to Someone I love Has Cancer, but targets slightly younger audience).

What Happens Someone I Love has Cancer / Qué Pasa Cuando Alguien a Quien Amo Tiene Cáncer

Sara Olsher (both English and Spanish copies available)

Ages 4-11

Written with purpose of relieving the anxiety and confusion that comes from a parent, sibling, or other loved one's cancer diagnosis and treatment by arming kids with knowledge.

Mia and her stuffed giraffe Stuart explain the science of cancer and how a loved one's diagnosis and treatment affects a kid's day-to-day life. *For ex, showing* how cells can turn into cancer, and talking about how cancer treatment affects a person and kids.

I Have a Question about Cancer: Clear Answers for All Kids, including Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder or other Special Needs

Arlen Grad Gaines & Meredith Englander Polsky

Ages 5-11

This book is designed to help kids, including children with autism spectrum disorder or other additional needs, to understand what it means when someone in their life has cancer.

Using a question and answer format, it explores the life changes and feelings of uncertainty a child may experience if a loved one has cancer. Uses illustrations to help visual learners. It features a short picture story that repeats the complete story for children who process information best through visual cues.

Mommy Has Cancer: What I Learned about Cancer and How I Helped my Mommy

Corey Stevenson

Ages 5-11

Corey Jr. is a nine-year-old from Saint Louis, Missouri, who shares about his journey during his mother's battle with breast cancer. Provides explanations of cancer, common treatments and side effects. *Includes BIPOC characters and references to faith, God and prayer. Focuses on being kind, showing love and gratitude for family.*

My Parent Has Cancer and it Really Sucks

Maya Silver & Marc Silver

Ages 12-17; parent guide as well

Author Maya Silver was 15 when her mom was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2001. She and her dad, Marc, have combined their family's personal experience with advice from dozens of medical professionals and real stories from 100 teens—all going through the same thing Maya did.

A special section for parents also gives tips on strategies for sharing the news and explaining cancer to a child, making sure your child doesn't become the parent, what to do if the outlook is grim, and tips for how to live life after cancer.

The Cancer That Wouldn't Go Away

Hadassa Field

Ages 4-11

Specifically for child whose parent is living with metastatic cancer. The story focuses on the unique uncertainties of life with incurable cancer. Unlike stories about early-[stage](#) cancer, after which the parent is cured and life goes back to normal, for the family in this story, life has irrevocably changed. The future is uncertain. But love and laughter remain constant, as they take life one day at a time.

The Feelings Book

Todd Parr

Ages 1-5

Vibrantly illustrates the wide range of moods we all experience. Highlights the ever-changing, sometimes nonsensical emotions that we all feel. Aims to inspire kids to discuss their multitude of feelings in a kid-friendly, accessible format, told through bold, bright colors and silly scenes.

Invisible String

Patricia Krest

Age 3-8

A tool for coping with all kinds of separation anxiety, loss, and grief. A mother tells her two children that they're all connected by an invisible string, offering a very simple approach to overcoming loneliness, separation, or loss with an imaginative twist.

My Heart

Corinna Luyken

Ages 3 and up

A beautiful acknowledgement of the many experiences and emotions in our hearts. The theme is elusive at first as are the soft, somewhat tentative pictures. The story begins with a heart in a garden waiting to be nurtured by a little girl. The poetic text describes the heart in a number of unexpected ways. It's a window that can be opened or closed and sometimes it is a puddle or a stain. These metaphorical descriptions move children away from the anatomical and utile aspects of the heart (the pumper of blood with chambers and ventricles, etc.) and offers the idea of the heart as a reflection of the child in the world. The final words carry a lot of power: "I get to decide."

Stop and Smell the Cookies

Gibson Frazier

Ages 3- 8

A story about big emotions and ways to self-regulate. Dash doesn't mean to mess up, but he just can't help karate-chopping his grandma's plate of cookies, blurting out the answer in class, and blowing out the candles on Cate's birthday cake. Luckily Mom is on hand to help. She uses the scenarios in Dash's bad day to help him remember a breathing and counting self-regulation technique whenever he feels the telltale warm and fuzzy feeling in his chest, tingling in his toes, and fingers starting to dance-breathe in the cookies, blow out the candle, and count to 100.

Once Upon a Time There Was and Will Be So Much More

Johanna Schaible

Ages 5-11

The book uses words and creative visual techniques to invite children into considering time - the past, present, and infinite possibility of the future.

Lifetimes: The Beautiful Way to Describe Death to Children

Bryan Mellonie

Ages 3 and up

Lifetimes is a gentle introduction to discussions on life and death. It talks about beginnings, and endings and about the living in between. With large, wonderful illustrations, it tells about plants, animals and people's lives. The book normalizes death and dying as a part of the life cycle. Secular approach.