



10 WAYS TO HELP KIDS WHO HAVE A PARENT WITH CANCER OR WHO HAVE LOST A PARENT TO CANCER

- ♥ Acknowledge the fact that the child's parent is sick.
 - The child is aware of the parent's sickness, acknowledgement of this fact allows the child to be able to talk freely about how they are feeling and shows the child that you care about not only the parent, but the child.

- ♥ Ask the child, "*How are You doing*"?
 - Lots of attention is placed on the parent, by asking how the child is doing, you give the child a sense of self-worth.

- ♥ Be available to help support the family. Don't ask for permission, just do it!
 - Take the kids to dinner. Give the parents some quiet time together.
 - Grocery shop for the family. Stock the refrigerator with food for the kids.
 - Take the kids to soccer or softball practice. The pace of life and the stress indicator just shifted into high gear. Ease some of that chaos.

- ♥ Do not make promises that you will not keep.
 - Promise a child that you will be there when they need help. Then **BE THERE!** Make promises and plans, then follow through. Disappointments last forever in the form of resentments. Kept promises last forever in the form of love and caring.

- ♥ Provide a fun distraction.
 - Family life is a bit strained; relief from that, even for a brief period of time, makes a big difference to the child's emotional health.

- ♥ Be available to just listen!
 - Dealing with the emotional side is critical and an integral part of what the parent and child are going through. Just be there so that they can express those feelings in an environment of love, caring and understanding.

- ♥ Be compassionate and understanding!
 - Whether you are the child's teacher, coach, friend or family member, put yourself in the shoes of the child.
 - If the homework did not get done perfectly and on time, or the child did not show up for practice, be patient and try to understand how the child is feeling.

- ♥ Be informed!
 - Knowledge about the specific cancer and the stage at which the parent is in with the disease allows you to be more understanding toward the needs of the child.

- ♥ Be realistic!
 - Kids are smarter than you think. Being honest gives credibility and support to the child.