



THE MINI
STICKS *co*

2024-2025

SEASON IMPACT SUMMARY

<https://theministicksco.org>



Introduction



The Mini Sticks Charitable Organization (aka The Mini Sticks CO) is a nonprofit organization that aims to support kids and their families affected by cancer with a simple vision: provide an escape from cancer.

The organization was founded in 2022 by Tucker Shedd while playing for the Omaha Lancers in the United States Hockey League at the age of 18. When Tucker was 9-year-old, his mother was diagnosed with cancer, but “still made sure she was there to drive me to practice and come to games and tournaments no matter how tired or sick she felt”. Tucker’s teammates and the support of his team were what helped him manage the challenge of his mom’s illness.

WHY IT MATTERS



In 2024, it's estimated that 2,001,140 new cancer cases will be diagnosed in the United States, excluding basal and squamous cell skin cancers (1). Of those, approximately 14,910 are expected to be children and adolescents aged 0 to 19, and tragically, an estimated 1,590 will die from the disease (2). This highlights the harsh reality that cancer can affect anyone, regardless of age, income, or location. While overall cancer mortality rates have been decreasing, incidence rates for some cancers continue to rise, and significant disparities in cancer outcomes persist among different racial and ethnic groups. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of the billions of dollars allocated for cancer research is directed towards pediatric cancer. This lack of funding hinders the development of new, more effective treatments, leaving many children reliant on therapies developed decades ago (2).

(1) American Cancer Society: Cancer Facts & Figures 2024.

(2) National Cancer Institute (NCI).

SCORE FOR AWARENESS

The MiniSticks Charitable Organization has demonstrably shifted its focus towards amplifying awareness concerning pediatric cancer, strategically leveraging social media platforms to achieve this goal. A key component of this shift involved the implementation of targeted campaigns, most notably their concentrated effort during September's Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. By utilizing daily posts on Instagram, they achieved a substantial increase in visibility, driving a significant portion of their annual online engagement. This concentrated effort to bring attention to pediatric cancer underscores the organization's commitment to not only providing charitable aid, but also to informing and mobilizing a broader community around this critical cause.

MiniSticks Charitable Organization's social media content, particularly during their pediatric cancer awareness campaigns, was carefully curated and grounded in research studies. Rather than relying on anecdotal evidence, the organization prioritized disseminating accurate and impactful information. Posts often incorporated data from reputable medical journals and cancer research institutions, translating complex findings into accessible formats for a wider audience. This approach ensured that awareness efforts were not only emotionally resonant but also scientifically sound, fostering informed engagement and promoting a deeper understanding of pediatric cancer's realities and research advancements. By anchoring their messaging in evidence-based studies, the MiniSticks CO established themselves as a trusted source of information, strengthening their credibility and maximizing the campaign's educational impact.

We've used Instagram this year to share research-backed information, aiming to increase public awareness of pediatric cancer and its profound effects on children and families



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New research shows that childhood cancer survivors have twice the odds of developing prediabetes (a precursor to full-blown diabetes) compared to peers without any history of cancer.
(Journal of Clinical Oncology, December 2023)

#CHILDHOODCANCERAWARENESS

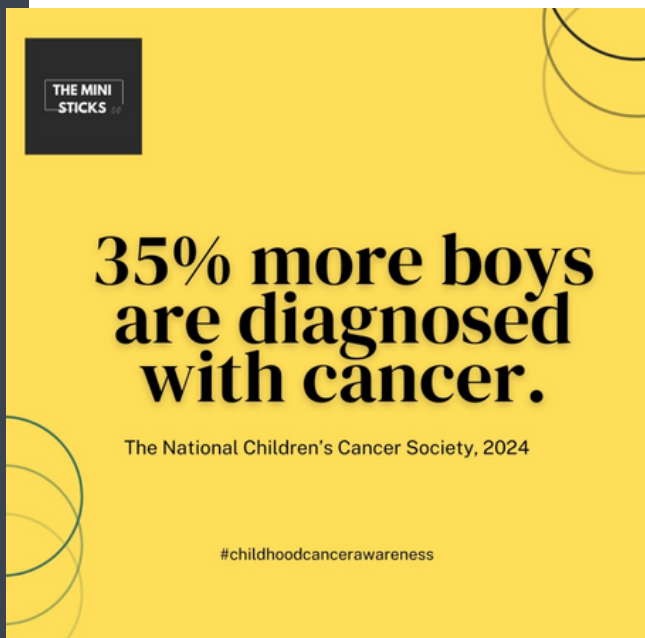


HOW FAR WOULD YOU HAVE TO GO?

ONE STUDY OF CHILDHOOD CANCER PATIENTS FOUND THAT 64% TRAVELED 30 MINUTES FOR CARE. 20% NEEDED TO TRAVEL UP AN HOUR. AND 12% HAD TO TRAVEL BETWEEN ONE AND TWO HOURS FOR CARE.
(LIU, FLUVHEL, KIRCHHOFF, ZHU, & ONEGA, 2023)

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#CHILDHOODCANCERAWARENESS

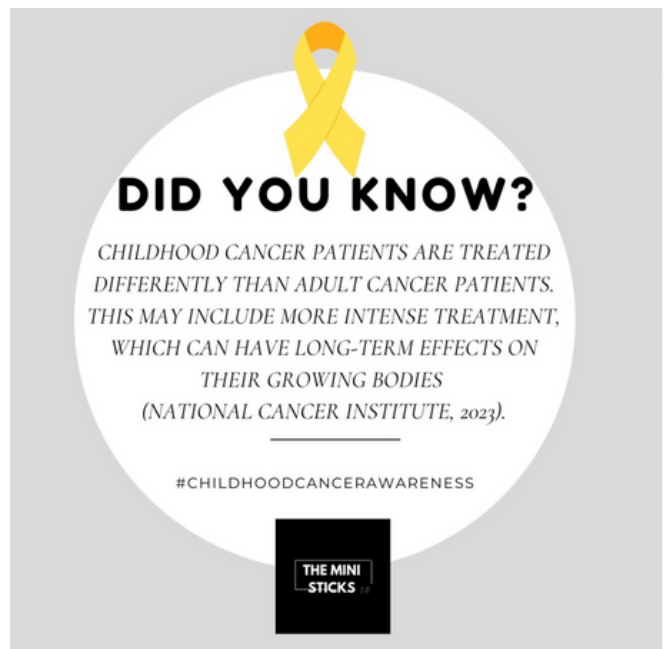


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35% more boys are diagnosed with cancer.

The National Children's Cancer Society, 2024

#childhoodcancerawareness



DID YOU KNOW?

CHILDHOOD CANCER PATIENTS ARE TREATED DIFFERENTLY THAN ADULT CANCER PATIENTS. THIS MAY INCLUDE MORE INTENSE TREATMENT, WHICH CAN HAVE LONG-TERM EFFECTS ON THEIR GROWING BODIES
(NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE, 2023).

#CHILDHOODCANCERAWARENESS

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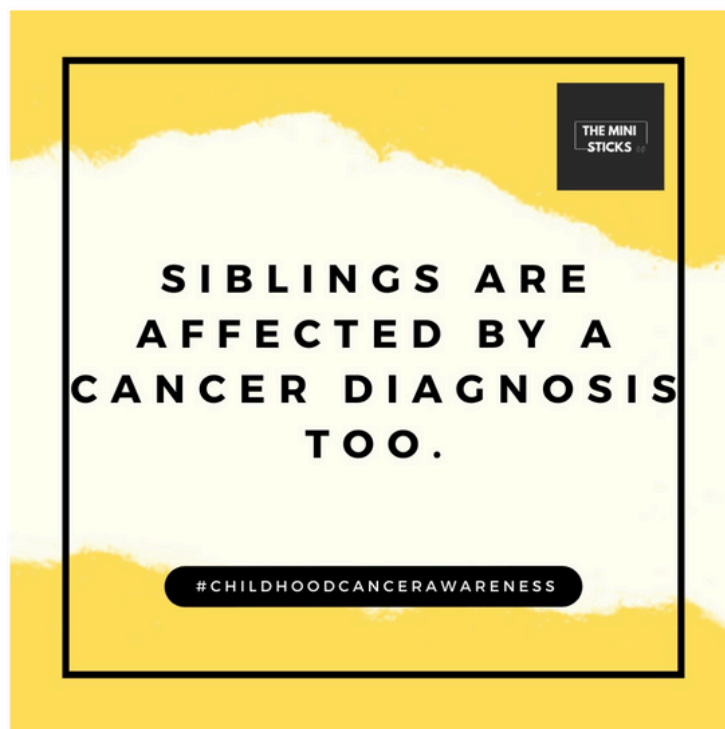
Instagram proved to be a powerful platform for MiniSticks, generating **12,461 views** over the year. A substantial portion of this, **10,661 views**, resulted from our dedicated **September campaign** for Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, which included daily posts. Complementing this, MiniSticks also recorded 753 unique Facebook engagements.

Notably, the most viewed post was the September 17, 2024 post “Siblings are affected by a cancer diagnosis too” with accompanying text:

A recent study found that financial concerns associated with cancer followed sibs of cancer patients into adulthood. The study found the sibs indicated they were more likely to share concern about medical bills, avoid medical or dental care due to cost, and worried about the cost of healthy food compared to the general public (Cancer, January 2024).

[#childhoodcancerawareness](#) [#cancer](#) [#hockeylove](#)

This single post reached 1,539 accounts.



[HTTPS://WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/THEMINISTICKSCO/](https://www.instagram.com/theministickSCO/)

BEYOND THE SCOREBOARD

The MiniSticks Charitable Organization directed crucial funds to support pediatric cancer initiatives. We proudly donated \$450 to Angels Among Us in Omaha, Nebraska, providing vital support through two separate contributions. Additionally, \$250 went directly to Omaha Children's Hospital, fueling their mission to provide exceptional care. These donations represent our commitment to making a tangible impact in the lives of children and families facing cancer.

In September, our team joined Alex's Lemonade Stand's The Million Mile, and we were thrilled to exceed our goal! We logged an incredible 462 miles, surpassing our initial 350-mile target. This effort was about more than just miles; it was about raising crucial awareness for pediatric cancer and directly contributing to the fight. We also raised \$135 towards this vital cause.



OFF THE ICE

We were so proud to know and love Kailey Lawson and immensely sad to learn she passed away in August 2024 in the loving arms of her family. While our hearts continue to ache with sadness, we want to remember and celebrate the incredible energy Kailey brought into our lives. Her spirit was radiant, her smile infectious, and watching Kailey and Tucker together was absolutely magical. We'll forever cherish the memories of her vibrant personality and the positive impact she had on everyone around her. Though she's no longer with us, Kailey's energy and spirit will continue to inspire us, fueling our commitment to fighting childhood cancer and honoring her memory.

