



PETITION TO INCREASE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH

I get hurt, and my heart is refilled with pain when I see another child undergoing the same traditional chemotherapy and radiation. These cancer treatments meant for adults are the same treatment processes my child went through before meeting her death.

My daughter, Jocelyn, was first diagnosed with Atypical Teratoid Rhabdoid Tumor, a form of brain cancer, when she was 17 months old. After a grievous struggle for two and a half years she died at the age of 3 and a half years old.

My

husband and I had big dreams and plans for our daughter. She had shown a keen interest in pictures of skyscrapers and beautiful buildings, which made us believe she was uniquely talented. She was the source of our joy, and we kept each other happy. All changed when our daughter was diagnosed with brain cancer. The treatment process was harrowing, and I do not wish the same to happen to other parents hence my humble appeal.

I am passionate about finding a pain-free cure for brain cancer since the death of a child is one too many. Despite having lost my daughter, my continued fight and advocacy for a cure for childhood cancer is inspired by a heart felt wish that other children with cancer find effective treatment and save their parents from undergoing depression, as was my case.

Simple research from the National Cancer Institute on statistical data about childhood cancer paints a gruesome picture of how childhood cancer is the leading cause of death by disease past infancy among children in the United States. It has been formally estimated in 2022 that over 15,600 children will be diagnosed with childhood cancer, and 1,780 will die of the disease in the United States. Further, brain cancers are the second most common form of childhood cancer, accounting for over 20% of all cases.

Our young daughter started having challenges with hand and legs movements, which resulted in a lack of body balance and worsening hand-eye coordination.

My daughter also showed signs of poor eyesight since the brain cancer affected the optic pathway.

The devastating experience as a parent was watching Jocelyn's health and persona gradually dissociate during the two years she underwent treatment. Watching her transform from a bubbly and energetic girl to a malnourished, miserable, sad dying three-year-old was agonizing.

Besides the mental anguish parents go through while caring for a child with brain cancer, family life and functioning may be negatively impacted. As her parents, we experienced stress and marital conflict almost daily. Unfortunately, negative family functioning may affect the child's psychological and cognitive development.

Besides dysfunctionalities amongst parents, parents also experience psychological symptoms, such as anxiety and depression, since they may be exacerbated by work, financial difficulties, poor social support, and most parents have to assimilate a large amount of information about their child's illness. Sadly, these parents walk around with the constant traumatizing fear and concern over their child's long-term survival.

Such undesirable and overwhelming experiences suffered by children with brain cancer and their parents can be significantly reduced if the federal government increases funding meant for childhood cancer research. Currently, the U.S federal government funding towards cancer research stands at a meager 4%. This

financial allocation is insufficient and deficient hence, the high cases of childhood cancer casualties. This critical funding should be increased from 4% to 8% to facilitate proper and adequate research towards obtaining effective remedies for childhood cancer, including brain cancer.

The sharing and signing of this petition will contribute to the facilitation, lobbying, and passing of a healthcare policy or law in Congress that allocates more funding of national resources to childhood cancer research. The increased funding will trigger improved outcomes as far as childhood cancer research is concerned.

By signing this petition, you will not only be increasing awareness over childhood cancer but also push for the increased budgetary allocation towards this noble cause and enable researchers to find much better technology in treating children with brain cancer. Furthermore, intense research shall help to develop childhood cancer vaccines.

Currently, there are thousands of parents in America undergoing similar or even worse trauma compared to my experience. Worse is that most such parents await a sad and unprepared painful demise of their children with cancer.

We need 12 million signatures behind this petition to spur effective lobbying to raise the current fund catered towards childhood cancer research from 4% to 8%.

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