



PETITION TO INCREASE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH

Finding the strength during such hardship is a difficult task. Being riddled with so many negative feelings due to not knowing from one day to the next, if your child is going to face yet another obstacle that will prevent him from the success of remission. This is the struggle that a parent faces on a daily basis. These are the things that children go through while fighting cancer and it is completely out of our control.

Joshua was 16 when he was diagnosed with Pelvic Ewing Sarcoma. This is a rare cancer found in the pelvis of children and adolescents. It is a hard cancer to diagnose and manage due to the location of the tumor being so deep in the pelvis. There are roughly 200 children and teens diagnosed with Ewing Sarcoma each year. My son fought for 11 months before he was in remission. The success of beating cancer is an amazing feeling, not only for the child but the parent as well. Unfortunately these victories can be short lived. Which has been the case for Joshua.

Not long after beating the Sarcoma, Joshua was diagnosed with MDS. MyelodysPlastic Syndrome is a type of rare blood cancer caused by the bone marrow failing to produce healthy blood cells. Approximately 10,000 people in the United States are diagnosed with MDS each year. Though this type of cancer is uncommon in people under 50, only occurring in 4 out of every one million children.

Our federal government has allocated a mere 4% of government funding for childhood cancer research in the United States. Which is a far cry from the percentage deserved by these children. This percentage needs to be increased to 8% minimum for proper research. The increased funds would be much needed to ensure consistent research for childhood cancer all year round, as opposed to one month out of the year in September.

To find out that your child has cancer one time is devastating. But how do you even handle thinking they are in the clear, only to have that victory taken from them by a second and more life threatening type of cancer? Joshua is currently still battling MDS and it has taken so much out of him. He is unable to lead a fulfilling life due to all of his symptoms.

Not only is the cancer diagnosis of a child mentally exhausting. Causing depression and anxiety in both the parents and the child. There also comes the unknown of it all. Especially not knowing if he will have the physical strength to beat this again. I wake up from recurring nightmares about what could happen to our son. There is also the financial burden parents face. When Joshua was first diagnosed in 2020, I had to quit my job in order to care for him full time. On a daily basis, I struggle to know whether we will have a place to live and how I will pay for everything my son needs.

No child should have to worry about whether they are going to live or die. They should not have to cry in pain from having their bodies injected with toxic drugs that make them worse before making them better. These chemicals can potentially cause life long side effects and could lead to other types of cancer. The treatments are not up to date, which leaves the family to pick up the pieces of what is left behind depending on the outcome. I strive to find a cure so these brave, resilient warriors no longer have to suffer from this.

By signing this petition, you will not only be increasing awareness over childhood cancer but also pushing for the increased budgetary allocation towards this noble cause and enable researchers to find much better technology in treating children with cancer. In doing so, this intense research will also help to develop childhood cancer vaccines. We need 12 million signatures to ensure effective lobbying to raise the current funds for childhood cancer. But we need all of the help we can acquire in order to do so. Please stand with us to raise childhood cancer research funding from 4% to 8%.

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