



PETITION TO INCREASE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH

Hannah Wagaman was diagnosed with Extra Renal Rhabdoid tumor at the young age of 3 years old. This is a type of tumor that is made up of many large cells and is quite rare. RT is an aggressive pediatric soft tissue sarcoma. It arises in the kidneys, the liver, the peripheral nerves and all miscellaneous soft-parts throughout the body. It can also grow in the brain as well. This specific type of tumor occurs in infancy or childhood. Symptoms include pain presenting as fussiness in infants with blood in the urine. There is often a mass in the abdomen and even high blood pressure can occur. Rhabdoid tumors have always been considered highly malignant with a poor prognosis. The survival time for children with this type of tumor is between 6 and 11 months. However, recent studies have shown better outcomes in children 3 years of age or older.

Hannah was not potty trained at the age of 3 so she was still wearing diapers. We had noticed one day when changing her diaper that there was blood inside. We immediately took her to see the doctor. After tests were done, we were given the horrific news that our daughter had a rhabdoid tumor. It was a shock to us and we were completely devastated. As most families with children fighting cancer of any kind, you are not educated about childhood cancer.

You are left not knowing what to expect and that is terrifying. Knowing you can do nothing is probably almost as devastating as the diagnosis itself. Hannah's tumor was aggressive and the outcome is not always good but by the grace of God, her tumor was found early.

Treatments took such a toll on her tiny body. She had to undergo bladder surgery to have it completely removed and now has a urostomy bag. She also had to have a partial hysterectomy. One of the side effects to her chemo left her with Fanconi syndrome (syndrome of inadequate reabsorption in the proximal renal tubules of the kidney). This syndrome has caused her to now suffer stage 3 chronic kidney disease. She now has to go to the hospital every 2 months to have stents replaced in her stoma. Although she is now 7 years old and in remission, she still suffers from the side effects and likely will for the rest of her life. Cancer has taken so much from our sweet daughter and turned our world upside down. Both myself and her father could not work while she was on her treatments due to her being hospitalized 3 weeks out of every month for about a year. This definitely caused a huge amount of financial stress on us.

Cancer is the #1 cause of death by disease for children in America. 1 out of 5 children with cancer in the United States do not survive over 5 years. Even with a more curable diagnosis, too many children in the United States do not have access to the medical care they need. Without treatment, cancer is the same death sentence that it was prior to modern medicine. Every year there are an estimated 15,780 children between the ages birth and 19 years of age who are diagnosed with cancer. Globally there are more than 300,000 children diagnosed with cancer each year. These numbers are way too high which is why it is so crucial that we see the federal funding rise from 4% to 8%. I am very passionate about helping raise awareness on childhood cancer and I will do all I can to see that more is done for our children.

Hannah was never sick before her diagnosis. She loved playing with her baby dolls. She always loved to run and play; she was such a ray of sunshine. Hannah has fought so hard over the years. I have never seen someone with such a will to fight. She truly is a warrior. With everything she has endured, she still carries her bright smile and lights up our lives. Although there are always possibilities of other surgeries, we are doing our best to stay as positive for her as we can. As hard as it is, we refuse to allow cancer to destroy us.

Right now, the federal government is allocating a baffling 4% for federal funding for childhood cancer research. This is not nearly enough funding. By signing this petition, you will help facilitate lobbying and the advance of a healthcare policy that will designate a higher percentage of resources for childhood cancer research. This will potentially help researchers find a vaccine for childhood cancer which would then possibly shorten the time these children have to fight and give them a chance at a normal life. We are in need of 12 million signatures to advance to the next phase in making this happen. These children deserve to be heard. Please join us by signing and sharing this petition so that we can make that possible.

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN PETITION](#)