



PETITION TO INCREASE FEDERAL FUNDING OF CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH

On January 14, 2022, my son Liam was diagnosed with T-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (T-ALL). Never did we think our lives would change that day, but cancer will suddenly and completely alter your life. Liam turns 3 years old this year. His treatment is expected to last three and a half years. It all started when I took him to the doctor because his tonsils were swollen. The doctor gave us antibiotics and still a week later the swelling had not gone down. They scheduled him for labs to be done on January 14, 2022. He woke up that morning with petechiae all over his body, which are small reddish purple spots caused by bleeding into the skin. The moment the doctor saw him she expressed to me that she thought it was either cancer or mono and that the lab testing would reveal more information. She tried to prepare me and told me to go pack my bags just in case we would have to travel to the Children's Hospital. By that evening, Liam was acting really lethargic and not responding to me. I looked at his lab results online as soon as they were available; as his mother, I just knew something was incredibly wrong. I took matters into my own hands and we headed to the hospital. On the way I was already in tears as I got the call that we needed to go. I just knew it was bad news. I am a mom of four and they told me that my two year old son has cancer. It all happened so fast. Life was flashing before my eyes, and it all still is a living nightmare.

There has been so much emotional distress. It has been overwhelming. Due to a mass in his chest, he stopped breathing and for two days my son had to go on a ventilator. He also had a chest tube to drain some of the fluid surrounding his lungs. Those were the most terrifying two days of our lives. We did not know if he was going to make it then and there are still no promises now.

We have dealt with pneumonia twice since his diagnosis. He currently has pneumonia, and it has been very rough for us all. Liam is down a few pounds, and we are trying so hard to get him to eat as he is very sick. My son is a fighter for sure. He never gives up no matter what obstacles are thrown at him, but he should not have to suffer from cancer and the cruel treatments required that shut his immune system down. It's all risking his life to possibly save his life. There needs to be better solutions for our children, 4% of Federal Funding to support childhood cancer research is not enough to make progress.

This fight has been so hard to watch him battle; not just for me, but for his whole family to experience. The amount of chemotherapy, medications, spinal taps, and bone marrow biopsies has been so hard on all of us. Liam getting sick all the time and him not being himself from all the treatment has taken a huge toll on everyone close to him. Watching your child go through the effects of cancer, the treatments, and the illness it causes every day is devastating. There is nothing easy about it. There needs to be more awareness of how tragic the whole experience of having a child with cancer really is, to show how important it is to find a cure for all children and their families.

Currently cancer treatments are inhumane. To witness the toxic chemicals they pump into your child's body making them terribly sick and all the risk involved is horrible. I would do anything to save my son's life. These treatments are our only medical options right now so we have to do it. My boy has already fought so hard and is still fighting this nasty battle! We see how it affects families everyday at the hospital, on social media, and in our home.

Cancer can happen to any child. Approximately 1 in 285 children in the U.S. will be diagnosed with pediatric/childhood cancer of any age ranging from newborn to teens. After accidents, cancer is the second leading cause of death in children ages 1 to 14, which means cancer is the #1 leading cause of death to children over any other disease. No child is immune to this disease. No child deserves cancer; No family deserves cancer, yet so many have to live the reality of cancer every day and even worse, so many children lose their lives.

T-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (T-ALL) is an aggressive malignant neoplasm of the bone marrow. At the National Institute of Health (NIH) and National Library of Medicine/National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI), it is reported T-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (T-ALL) currently does not come without a cost as intensive therapy is required. Further, approximately 25% of children relapse, and when that happens the cancer is often resistant to current treatments. If a relapse occurs the prognosis is much poorer, with approximately 30% survival rate.

It is a shame that our US Federal Government has currently allocated only 4% funding toward Childhood Cancer Research Funding. Increasing this percentage to 8% is needed and critically important for proper and effective research for possible prevention, early diagnosis, and better treatments. This in turn will cause less suffering as current treatments are extremely harsh and damaging to the human body and mind especially for a developing child. Current treatments cause children and their families to suffer long-term, more than just the cancer alone. We also need the appropriate research funding for cures to each type of pediatric cancer. Of all the independent fundraising for research that exists, none of it amounts to what our Federal Government can do for our children with increased childhood cancer research funding.

By signing this petition, you will be paving the way to make a direct and lasting impact upon the lives of many future generations of children and their families; also, you will be helping achieve a bit of justice for those who have already suffered. Help be a voice for children and positive change in this world that we live in. We need 12 million signatures behind this petition to begin lobbying for raising the current US Federal funding allocated towards childhood cancer research from 4% to 8%. Together we will make a positive change!

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN PETITION](#)