



PETITION TO INCREASE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH

At 5 years old, Nilah was diagnosed with Philadelphia chromosome Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. In pediatric patients with ALL, the Philadelphia chromosome is very rare, being seen in less than 5% of children. It creates an abnormal BCR-ABL fusion gene that makes an abnormal protein that helps leukemia cells to grow. This gene is not something that children are born with. The Philadelphia chromosome is considered very high risk and only 20% to 30% of positive cases can be cured with chemotherapy alone.

As a parent, receiving the news that your child has cancer is traumatizing. Our journey since finding out that Nilah is sick, has been an emotional rollercoaster. We never know from one day to the next what will happen. There is no possible way to wrap your mind around the fact that, in our case, Nilah's diagnosis is so rare they are going to have to treat her with the only drugs they have for this type of cancer. Which are specifically made for adults. I had to watch my daughter flatline as doctors worked to bring her back. The research is not there for what she is going through but if I do not allow it, she will die.

The federal government has allocated a baffling 4% of government funding for cancer research in the United States, which is far from enough. This percentage needs to be increased to a minimum of at least 8% for proper research. We have to come together to facilitate the lobbying and passing of a healthcare policy or law that allocates a higher percentage of national resources to childhood cancer research.

One of the many reasons I am so passionate about finding a cure for childhood cancer, is that no family should have to endure this heartache. The constant fight to become healthy again, but depending on the type of cancer your child has they may still lose their fight. You have to come to terms with the fact that they may go into remission but there is always a possibility of relapse. So many things need to change in order to give our children a fair shot at life.

By signing this petition, you will be helping to increase Childhood cancer research funding from 4% to 8%. These increased funds would be a much needed shot in the arm, as public healthcare institutions would be actively researching childhood cancer all year round, rather than waiting until Childhood Cancer Awareness month in September. We need 12 million signatures to move this forward. Every signature counts in making that possible. These children are our future and they deserve more than the mere 4% they are given at this time. We will not stop fighting until that number is raised to 8%.

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