

# Pathfinder Series: Talking to Children

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This pathfinder provides information about resources available in the JCC Patient & Family Resource Centre and on the internet.

## Books & Audiovisual

*Cancer in Our Family: Helping Children Cope With a Parent's Illness* / Sue P. Heiney and Joan F. Hermann. 6.5.2 2013

This book was written for families with young children or adolescents, to help them cope with the changes, disruption, and challenges cancer can bring to family life. Activity pages are included for children as well as a very good resource list and references.

*Let My Colors Out* / Courtney Filigenzi. 6.5.9 2009

A young boy uses colour to express a range of emotions as his mother undergoes cancer treatment, and his colours help him understand that it's okay to let his feelings out. Aimed at very young children.

*Mom Has Cancer!* / Jennifer Moore-Mallinos. 6.5.26 2008

This sensitively written story points out that Mom's cancer diagnosis is as frightening for her children as it is for her. The story helps kids understand how Mom requires special medical care on her path toward regaining health, but also that they can depend on their parents for emotional support. There is also a short section at the back offering advice to parents.

*Parenting Through Cancer: How to Talk to Your Kids When You Have Cancer* / Janice Haines, et al. 6.5.6 2008 DVD

Children of different ages have different needs when it comes to understanding cancer and its impact on the family. Whether you are newly diagnosed or in recurrence, this DVD provides the basis for opening up healthy lines of communication, addressing family needs, and providing tools for the family to become strengthened by the experience no matter what the outcome.

*Understanding Cancer: Mishoo's Story* / John Rice. 6.5.22 2008

This is the story of Mishoo, a grandfather, who is trying to explain to his granddaughter what cancer is and why her aunt died from it. In the tradition of his culture, he teaches about cancer through a story.

*You are not alone: Families touched by cancer* / Eva Grayzel. 6.5.23 2010

This book was written by a cancer survivor in hopes of inspiring other parents and children who have a family member with cancer. Cancer changes family dynamics; everyone in the family is affected. The children in this book are learning how change in their parent's health alters their daily interactions. The author provides ideas and suggestions on what can be done to soothe sadness, ease tension and find strength.

## Websites

American Cancer Society – Children and cancer: information and resources

<http://www.cancer.org/Treatment/ChildrenandCancer/index?ssSourceSiteId=null>

This site, from the American Cancer Society has detailed information on talking to children. The section “Dealing with a cancer diagnosis in the family” offers advice on explaining the initial diagnosis, recurrence, treatment, terminal illness and much more.

riprap: when a parent has cancer <http://www.riprap.org.uk/>

This site was developed especially for teenagers who have a parent with cancer. In riprap, you can learn more about cancer and its treatment and through individual stories you can see how this might affect you and your family.

Cancer Research UK – Talking to children <http://cancerhelp.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cancer-questions/support-for-children-whose-parents-have-cancer>

A brief guide to help assist adults in talking with children of all ages about cancer. Topics include common misunderstandings children might have, school and friend issues and more.

Canadian Virtual Hospice: Talking with children and youth about serious illness

<http://virtualhospice.ca/> (click “Topics” then “Emotional Health” for access to this article)

This is an excellent article with tips on starting the conversation about illness with your child, and ways to communicate depending on the ages of the children.

Cancer Council Queensland – What about me? ...for children when a parent has cancer

[http://www.cancerqld.org.au/2014\\_online\\_resource\\_forms\\_docs/WhatAboutMe.pdf](http://www.cancerqld.org.au/2014_online_resource_forms_docs/WhatAboutMe.pdf)

Written in a comic book style this little booklet offers information about cancer and helps children understand their emotions and fears as they deal with their parent's illness.



