

## **BOOKS FOR PARENTS:**

### **Cancer in Our Family, 2nd Edition by Sue P. Heiney & Joan F. Hermann (ACS Publication)**

Valuable information to help families through each step of the cancer journey: talking to children; helping children cope when a parent falls ill; answering difficult questions about cancer; explaining cancer treatment and its potential side effects; managing role changes and disruptions in routines; recognizing signs that a child needs help; finding ways to improve quality of life; and doing exercises to help communication and coping.

### **How to Help Children Through a Parent's Serious Illness, 2nd Edition by Kathleen McCue & Ron Bonn**

How to Help Children Through a Parent's Serious Illness has become the standard work on an important subject. A classic for over fifteen years, it continues to be a go-to book for supportive, practical advice, based on the lifetime experience and clinical practice of one of America's leading child life practitioners

### **Raising an Emotionally Healthy Child When a Parent is Sick by Paula Rauch & Ana Muriel**

Based on a Massachusetts General Hospital program, Raising an Emotionally Healthy Child When a Parent is Sick covers how you can address children's concerns when a parent is seriously ill, how to determine how children with different temperaments are really feeling and how to draw them out, ways to ensure the child's financial and emotional security and reassure the child that he or she will be taken care of.

### **When a Parent Has Cancer: A Guide to Caring for Your Children by Wendy S. Harpham**

When A Parent Has Cancer is a book for families written from the heart of experience. A mother, physician, and cancer survivor, Dr Wendy Harpham offers clear, direct, and sympathetic advice for parents challenged with the task of raising normal, healthy children while they struggle with a potentially life-threatening disease.

Dr Harpham lays the groundwork of her book with specific plans for helping children through the upheaval of a parent's diagnosis and treatment, remission and recovery, and if necessary, confronting the possibility of death. She emphasizes the importance of being honest with children about the gravity of the illness, while assuring them that their basic needs will always be met.

## **CHILDREN'S BOOKS:**

### **Because... Someone I Love Has Cancer, Kid's Activity Book by American Cancer Society**

This inspired publication is designed to address the basic goals of therapeutic support for children who have a loved one with cancer. Featuring five self-sharpening crayons to inspire creativity, this activity book also includes a 16-page removable guide for caregivers with family and group activities, as well as activities that offer ways to discover inner strengths and enhance self-esteem

### **Butterfly Kisses and Wishes on Wings by Ellen McVicke**

This award winning children's book, illustrated by Nanci Hersh, award winning artist and cancer survivor, is a listen-to/read-aloud book for children. A beautifully illustrated resource that can be used to educate and support any child who is facing the cancer of a loved one. The story, as told through the eyes of a child, lends itself to a simple and clear understanding of cancer. It also teaches children to realize the power they have to be an active and integral part of a loved one's cancer journey.

### **The Goodbye Cancer Garden by Janna Matthies & Kristi Valiant**

After Mom and Dad tell Janie and Jeffrey that Mom has Cancer, the whole family goes to the doctor to ask questions. "Is Mom better yet?" Jeffrey asked. "Not yet," she said. "But we're working very hard to make her better-probably by pumpkin time." That gave Janie an idea...the family plants a vegetable garden. As the garden grows, Mom's treatment progresses...surgery, chemo, head-shaving and other side effects, radiation...and when it's all done, there are healthy pumpkins and a healthy Mom!

### **Healthy Mom Healthy Me: Helping Kids When Mom's Sick by Gwen Ratermann**

Healthy Mom Healthy Me is an easy-to-use workbook to help children whose moms are experiencing a serious illness. Children will learn to:

- Recognize and reflect on their feelings.
- Express those feelings constructively.
- Visualize a good outcome for their mom's health.
- Create a journal that can be a safe place to describe what is important to them.
- Understand the value of being grateful every day.

### **Let My Colors Out by Courtney Filigenzi**

Unfortunately, many young children today are dealing with their parents' diagnoses and battles with life threatening illnesses. In *Let My Colors Out*, a young child is dealing with his mom's diagnosis and treatment of cancer. He experiences a range of emotions—scared, sad, jealous, feeling fine, denial, anger—that together form a rainbow of hope through this critical time.

This fully illustrated board book (concluding with a clever pop-up of balloons) can be a useful tool for parents, teachers, and counselors who deal with children ages 4-8. It will help children realize that they are not alone and that other people have felt the same things they are feeling.

### **Mom and the Polka-Dot Boo-Boo by Eileen Sutherland**

An informative and reassuring story that helps families talk with young children about breast cancer. Lovingly written by a mother of two it gently prepares children for what lies ahead in the weeks and months following their mother's diagnosis.

### **My Book About Cancer (father) by Rebecca C. Schmidt**

When a father or mother has been diagnosed with cancer, the entire family can be traumatized. "My Book About Cancer" is a workbook that gives children an effective emotional outlet as they cope with their parent's disease. By creating and discussing their own book of experiences with parents, grandparents, and other adult loved ones, children can share their emotions and concerns as the family progresses through the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. This interactive workbook is both a coloring book and a sketchpad. Children can color various animal characters that depict scenes, images, and emotions likely to be encountered during a parent's illness. Each facing page allows children enough blank space to draw pictures of their own experience. "My Book About Cancer" is available in two versions, one for children with a mother with cancer and one for those with a father with the disease.

### **Nowhere Hair book by Sue Glader & Edith Buenen**

The little girl in *NOWHERE HAIR* knows two things: Her mom's hair is not on her head anymore, so therefore it must be somewhere around the house. After searching the obvious places, the story reveals that her mother, although going through cancer treatment, is still silly, attentive, happy and yes, sometimes very tired and cranky. She learns that she didn't cause the cancer, can't catch it, and that Mommy still is very much up for the job of mothering. The book, written in rhyme, explains hats, scarves, wigs, going bald in public, and the idea of being nice to people who may look a little different than you. It ends with the idea that what is inside of us is far more important than how we look on the outside. For any parent or grandparent, *NOWHERE HAIR* offers a comfortable platform to explain

something that is inherently very difficult.

**Our Mom Has Cancer by Abigail & Adrienne Ackermann**

When Abigail and Adrienne's mom told them she had cancer, they were afraid. When the two sisters couldn't find any books for kids that explained what might happen to their mother and what they might expect, they decided to write one themselves. A humorous, honest, hopeful account of the year their mother underwent treatment, delightfully illustrated by the two girls.

**Promises by Elizabeth Winthrop**

At the opening of this moving and ultimately hopeful story, Sarah's mother is ill. During her treatment she seems to get sicker and sicker. She's often in the hospital, and at home she needs to rest. Sarah's world is turned upside down. After a long time, her mother starts feeling better. But Sarah still has one more difficult discovery to make: Her mom can't promise that she'll never get sick again. She can make other promises, though, and those special promises are enough for now. Warm, graceful watercolors add a light touch to this life-affirming picture book, perfect for any child whose family is touched by serious illness.

**You are the Best Medicine by Julie Aigner Clark & Jana Christy**

Watching someone you love go through cancer treatment is scary—especially for a child. In this courageous and sensitive book, cancer survivor Julie Clark creates sweet and poignant memories that remind us how children can nurture people they care about at a time when optimism and love are the most needed.

**TEENS**

**My Parent Has Cancer and It Really Sucks by Maya Silver & Marc Silver**

In a highly designed, engaging style, this book gives practical guidance that includes:

- how to talk about the diagnosis (and what does diagnosis even mean, anyway?)
- the best outlets for stress (punching a wall is not a great one, but should it happen, there are instructions for a patch job)
- how to deal with friends (especially one the ones with 'pity eyes')
- whether to tell the teachers and guidance counselors and what they should know (how not to get embarrassed in class)
- what happens in a therapy session and how to find a support group if you want one.

**DEATH AND DYING**

**Grief is Like a Snowflake by Julia Cook & Anita DuFalla**

After the death of his father, Little Tree begins to learn how to cope with his feelings and start the healing process. With the help and support of his family and friends, Little Tree learns to cope by discovering what is really important in life, and that his father's memory will carry on. Best-selling author, Julia Cook, and a lovable cast of trees, offers a warm approach to the difficult subject of death and dying.

**The Invisible String by Patrice Karst**

Specifically written to address children's fear of being apart from the ones they love, The Invisible String delivers a particularly compelling message in today's uncertain times that though we may be separated from the ones we care for, whether through anger, or distance or even death, love is the unending

connection that binds us all, and, by extension, ultimately binds every person on the planet to everyone else.

**Lifetimes by Bryan Mellonie & Robert Ingpen**

Lifetimes is a moving book for children of all ages, even parents too. It lets us explain life and death in a sensitive, caring, beautiful way. Lifetimes tells us about beginnings. And about endings. And about living in between. With large, wonderful illustrations, it tells about plants. About animals. About people. It tells that dying is as much a part of living as being born. It helps us to remember. It helps us to understand.

**When Dinosaurs Die by Laurie Krasny Brown & Marc Brown**

The authors explain in simple language the feelings people may have regarding the death of a loved one and the ways to honor the memory of someone who has died.

**WORRY**

**Wilma Jean and the Worry Machine by Julia Cook**

Anxiety is a subjective sense of worry, apprehension, and/or fear. It is considered to be the number one health problem in America. Although quite common, anxiety disorders in children are often misdiagnosed and overlooked. Everyone feels fear, worry and apprehension from time to time, but when these feelings prevent a person from doing what he/she wants and/or needs to do, anxiety becomes a disability. This fun and humorous book addresses the problem of anxiety in a way that relates to children of all ages. It offers creative strategies for parents and teachers to use that can lessen the severity of anxiety. The goal of the book is to give children the tools needed to feel more in control of their anxiety. For those worries that are not in anyone's control (i.e. the weather,) a worry hat is introduced. A fun read for Wilmas of all ages!

**Is a Worry Worrying You? by Ferida Wolff & Harriet May Savitz**

Adults think of childhood as a carefree time, but the truth is that children worry, and worry a lot, especially in our highly pressurized era. This book addresses children's worries with humor and imagination, as hilarious scenarios teach kids the use of perspective and the art of creative problem-solving.

**You've got Dragons by Kathryn Cave**

A young boy discovers that he has worries and fears that appear to him as dragons and shares what he learns about living with them.