

# A Lion in the House

**KETC/Channel 9**  
Wednesday and Thursday,  
June 21 and 22, 9:00 p.m.



JULIA REICHERT/TVIS

**COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT  
CAMPAIGN**

Join KETC and local partners in helping children and families who are coping with cancer or another serious illness.



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STEVEN BOGNAR/TVIS

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DEBBIE KENNEDY/TVIS

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ANNIE REICHERT/TVIS

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KETC/Channel 9's broadcast of A LION IN THE HOUSE seeks to galvanize public attention around childhood cancer. KETC and local partners are creating awareness about the role you play in helping children and families coping with serious illness. The project focuses on:

- **Helping Children with Cancer When They Return To School**
- **Pediatric Palliative Care and Hospice**
- **Helping Survivors of Childhood Cancer**
- **How to Help a Family Dealing With a Child's Serious Illness**
- **Insurance and Financial Issues**

### **Project Partners:**

- St. Louis Children's Hospital
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Barnes-Jewish Hospital/BJC
- The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
- American Cancer Society
- Central Reform Congregation
- BJC Wings Palliative Care/ Hospice
- National Children's Cancer Society
- MO Dept. of Health and Senior Services

## **Insurance and Financial Issues**

If your child has been diagnosed with cancer, the last thing you want to think about is money. Unfortunately, cancer treatment can be very costly depending on a family's resources and the medical care necessary to treat the disease. Here are some things to consider:

- Families with medical insurance should speak with the insurance company's customer service department about which providers are covered.
- In cases of dispute over coverage by the insurance company, contact the consumer advocacy office (Division of Insurance) of the government agency that oversees the insurance plan.
- Parents who do not have medical insurance should ask the team social worker, billing staff or financial counselor for guidance.
- There are expenses a family will incur that are not covered by insurers, like transportation, housing during treatment, food, or childcare. There may be help with these expenses from community agencies.

*\*Adapted with permission from the American Cancer Society*

## **Pediatric Palliative Care and Hospice**

Pediatric palliative and hospice care is a concept that brings multiple caregivers together as a team to provide care and support to children with serious illness and their families. The focus is to cure a child if at all possible, and to relieve suffering and improve quality of life for the child and their family. In hospice it is believed that dying children deserve physical and emotional comfort, to have their grief honored, and their lives celebrated. Unfortunately, less than 1% of children eligible for hospice care receive it.

The focus of pediatric palliative and hospice care is on comfort and caring and to:

- Address the unique needs and issues of care for dying children and adolescents, and for family members who provide the child's immediate support.
- Include child and family in the decision making process.
- Address the comprehensive, medical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs of children and family through individualized plan of care.
- Coordinate home and inpatient care.
- Provide grief support.

## **How Do I Help a Family Dealing with a Child's Serious Illness?**

Friends, family and the community are an essential source of support to a family who has a child with cancer or other serious illness. Talking to a parent whose child has cancer or other serious illness can be difficult. These tips may help when providing emotional support and maintaining friendships. Your support can truly make a difference.

- Stay in touch. Even if you don't know what to say, be available to listen.
- Respect a person's desire for privacy. Sometimes a person may not want to talk, but let them know that you're available when they need you.
- Let them determine how much information they want to share.
- Avoid giving unsolicited opinions. Each diagnosis is unique. Unless they ask, most families do not want to hear the outcomes of people you know.
- Your friendship is more valuable now than ever. Volunteer to help with household chores, other family members, pets, and offer financial support.

*\*Adapted with permission from The National Children's Cancer Society*

## **Are You a Survivor of Childhood Cancer?**

There are some important things you should know if you are a survivor of childhood cancer. This information is also appropriate for survivors of adult cancer.

- Can you name the type of cancer you had?
- Do you remember how old you were when you were diagnosed?
- Do you know the names of any chemotherapy and how much of it you received?
- If you received radiation treatments, do you know the dosage and part of the body treated?
- If you had surgery, do you know what was done?

If you know the answer to all of these questions, then you are on your way to being the best advocate for your future health.

If you don't know the answer to these questions, find out. Many times these treatments in childhood can lead to "late effects" which may not be noticed until you are older. There are now (specialized) programs to help you understand these risks and identify appropriate screenings and interventions.

## **How to Help a Child with Cancer when They Return to School**

Having cancer can bring physical, emotional and cognitive (ability to think and reason) changes, which can affect the child in school. You can help your child by recognizing problems before they become too difficult to manage.

- Encourage your child's interactions with classmates and peers.
- Communicate with your child's teachers. Let the school know what side effects are expected from treatment—now and in the years ahead.
- If your child is frequently absent and will have a hard time keeping up, request a homebound tutor as needed.
- Ask the counselor and physician about cognitive testing. These results may help the school to develop a learning plan.
- Ask your child's counselor about developing a 504 Plan or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) if necessary.

*\*Adapted with permission from the American Cancer Society and The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Trish Greene Back to School Program*

**Would you like to know more?**

**Go to [www.ketc.org](http://www.ketc.org)**

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