

HAWAII CHILDREN'S CANCER FOUNDATION



ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2008 - 2009

Hawaii Children's Cancer Foundation
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Mission Statement

Hawaii Children's Cancer Foundation (HCCF) serves to assist, support and advocate for the needs of patients, families and long term survivors of childhood cancer.

*The Foundation is dedicated to the children who are battling cancer,
to those who have survived,
and to those who survive in our hearts.*

Programs

Hawaii Children's Cancer Foundation (HCCF) serves to assist, support and advocate for the needs of children diagnosed with cancer, their families and long term survivors of childhood cancer. The Foundation is dedicated to the children who are battling cancer, to those who have survived and to those who survive in our hearts.

When a child is diagnosed with cancer, it is along and frightening journey through the one to three years of treatment, which effects all family members. Although medicine has made great strides in treating childhood cancers, approximately one-third of the children die. Besides the emotional devastation and struggle to cope with this life-threatening illness, the financial burden to families is tremendous. Often one parent must stop working for a period of time to care for their sick child. Out-of-pocket expenses for the families are extremely high.

In Hawaii there are approximately 50 to 60 new cases of childhood cancer each year and about 200 children in treatment at any given time. The children are treated primarily at Kapiolani Medical Center and also at Kaiser Medical Center and Tripler Army Hospital. Three members of HCCF's board of directors have close ties to Kapiolani Medical Center and outreach is ongoing to service children and families treated at Kaiser and Tripler. Families reside all over the state of Hawaii. HCCF keeps in regular contact with the families throughout the state through its newsletters and flyers of upcoming events and programs.

For the children diagnosed with cancer and their families, the journey does not end when treatment is completed. There are sometimes post-treatment problems and complications, follow up testing and screening for years, and the most feared outcome, relapses or secondary cancer diagnoses. Even families who are years past their child's actual treatment continue to require support, especially as learning disabilities or challenges are becoming more commonly found due to late effects of chemotherapy and radiation treatment regimens.

HCCF is the only organization in the state of Hawaii dedicated exclusively to children with cancer and their families. HCCF offers compassionate emotional support to families, first, with our Kokua Baskets given to newly diagnosed families by providing survival kits containing phone cards, gas and food certificates, some educational material and other items. HCCF's social events such as the annual Christmas party and a Thanksgiving luncheon offer the opportunity for families to network, support each other and share in the joy of the holiday season. The annual Christmas party is the most well attended HCCF event. The party is held at the Kapiolani Hospital dining hall so that in-patient children can attend as well. The hall is filled to standing room only capacity. Families long past treatment mingle together with newly diagnosed children and their families as well as the healthcare professionals who have seen the children through their entire treatment. It is truly a heartwarming time with a feeling of merriment and gratitude.

HCCF's most widely utilized program is the Family Assistance Program. The Foundation provides financial assistance to families to help defray medical expenses, housing and transportation costs and sometimes with burial and funeral expenses as well. Through HCCF's assistance, families have been able to better focus their attention on the child in treatment rather than worrying about unmet financial obligations. During the 2007 to 2008 fiscal year, the foundation provided approximately \$250,000 in financial assistance to 85 different families. Each year the program has grown. In a survey conducted by SMS Research for HCCF, there was a cry from the families for even more assistance. HCCF has assisted and continues to assist several military families who are residing in Hawaii.

A program that was developed in the last four years is HCCF's Book Reimbursement Program for young adult survivors who are engaged in some kind of post high school education or training. About 50 survivors have benefited from this program over its existence.

The Frank Seleny Scholarship Fund is to help those who have or have had childhood cancer. Two annual \$1,000 scholarships are available to help with expenses at college or vocational school on a competitive basis.

To assist in the health care for patients and survivors, three years ago, through a restricted grant, HCCF initiated a Healthcare Professionals' Education Fund. This program allows doctors, nurses, social workers and others to be assisted by HCCF so that they can attend conferences and seminars, usually held on the mainland, in the area of pediatric oncology. This program has been well received especially in these times of health care organizations tightening their budgets.

Additionally, HCCF is active throughout the year doing outreach to increase community awareness of childhood cancer and its impact on the children and their families. September is National Childhood Cancer Awareness month, and last year HCCF put on an all-day awareness event called Jungle Adventure at Honolulu Zoo. Children and families enjoyed games and food with a program of entertainment and speakers to promote awareness of childhood cancer issues and HCCF. Every September gold ribbons pins are distributed for a donation as a means to promote awareness. The gold ribbon symbolizes hope for all the children diagnosed with cancer and pays tribute to those who survive in our hearts.

All the programs and services are provided to the children diagnosed with cancer and to their families at no cost. As such, fund raising is an important foundation of the board of directors of HCCF. HCCF exists to help families through the entire journey of childhood cancer and our programs are clearly for the sake of the children.

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