

# How to Talk to Kids About **Childhood Cancer**

## What is cancer?

Cancer is a group of many related diseases that all have to do with cells. Cells are very small building blocks that make up all living things, including the human body. There are billions of cells in each person's body and they work together in a controlled way to keep us healthy and strong.

Cancer happens when cells grow too quickly and are not controlled by our bodies - these cells, called cancer cells, won't stop growing unless something is done to stop them. If they continue to grow out of control, they can hurt the normal cells that are supposed to be in our bodies and then the person can get very sick.



## Why do kids get cancer?

When a person under the age of 19 gets cancer, it is called childhood or pediatric cancer. In the United States, nearly 15,600 children each year are found to have cancer.

Doctors do not know why some children get cancer. They do know that children can't "catch" cancer from someone else - it is not contagious. So, if you know someone with cancer, you should not be afraid to be around them - you can play and talk to them just like anyone else.



Although most children with cancer will get better, cancer is a very serious disease and doctors have to work very hard to find the right ways to get rid of cancer in children. So, when a child gets cancer, the doctors will give special cancer medicines or have the person get a special surgery to remove the cancer cells. Most of the time, the cancer goes away and does not come back! Sometimes the cancer does not go away and the child gets sicker and even dies. This is what happened to Alex Scott, the little girl who started Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation.

## What can kids do to help?

Because not all kids with cancer get better, the doctors are still working hard every day to find new medicines and ways to get rid of all cancers in kids - they call this doing research to find a cure. This research can cost a lot of money.

Alex Scott was just a kid, but she knew that there were kids with cancer, just like her, who were not getting better from their cancer. She decided she could do something to help those kids by selling lemonade in her front yard. Her idea was that if she could give the doctors the money from her lemonade stand, they could work faster to find ways to make kids with cancer better.



Alex died when she was 8-years-old, but with the help of kids all over the country selling lemonade, she had raised more than \$1 million to make sure other kids with cancer had a chance to get better. Today, kids all over the world keep Alex's dream going by holding their own lemonade stands and sending their money to Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation. The great news is that because of all this lemonade stand money, more kids are getting better from cancer every day!

Learn more at [AlexsLemonade.org](https://AlexsLemonade.org)

