YOUR IMPACT

SPRING NEWSLETTER

THE KIDS' CANCER PROJECT

An update from our families, researchers and donors, just for you

A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

To our incredible community,

Thank you for your support of The Kids' Cancer Project and childhood cancer research this past year.

Since 1993, we've funded over $76 million worth of research, seeing survival rates climb to 87%.

We've still got work to do, though.

13% of children and young adults still tragically succumb to cancer, and 80% of those that do survive are left with long-lasting conditions that affect their quality of life.

As you read through this Spring Newsletter, consider how your support makes a lasting impact in funding vital kids' cancer research which helps these sooner.

A donation of $108 can fund one of our incredible scientists for two hours of work, helping to accelerate the breakthroughs that could save a child's life.

On behalf of everyone at The Kids' Cancer Project, thank you for your unwavering commitment in helping us realise our dream.

Best wishes,

Colin Reynolds.

Col Reynolds OAM
Founder, The Kids' Cancer Project

A SON'S IMPACT

Nearly two decades have passed since two Christy kids underwent cancer treatment in tandem. Their mum, Lisa, says one saved the other.

Advancements in medical research give us confidence that one day we will reach a 100% survival rate for children with cancer.

Despite what she's endured, Lisa Christy is one such optimist.

At just three years old, Lisa's son Ben tragically passed away on Christmas Eve in 2006 from a Wilms' tumour, which develops in the kidneys. Nearly two decades have passed since, but Ben's legacy is as strong as ever. The family recently celebrated Ben's 21st birthday by opening a bottle of scotch and reading a beautiful note penned by his father, Aaron.

"Ben taught me to live each day being happy, doing what you want to do, and connecting with the people around you," Lisa says.

"I would never wish what he went through on anyone, but he was so brave. If a little boy, at two years old, could face what he did, how can I ever complain about hardship?"

THE LITTLE LARRIKIN

Ben is never far from his mum's mind. Time hasn't taken away her love or her wounds, which have shaped who she is.

Lisa's memories and stories of her son make you feel like they're days old. Ben is often described as "the life of the party."

A routine day watching husband Aaron's rugby team turned into quite the story about Ben.

The Christy family, who lost their son and brother, Ben, to a Wilms' tumour in 2006.

Want to invest in the development of better treatments as Lisa says? A donation of $108 can enrol a child into a new clinical trial study!

"Someone yelled out that a little kid in a yellow skivvy was driving a golf buggy. I'd dressed Ben in a yellow skivvy that day. It was Ben steering the cart around!

"By the time we managed to stop the cart, he was in a fit of laughter. He just said to me with a huge grin on his face, 'Mum, that was the best thing ever'."

BEN AND ELLA'S BATTLE

The Wilms' tumour Ben suffered was genetic.

His father had one as a child, which resulted in a nephrectomy and radiation at a similar age to Ben, but the family were told that Wilms' tumours weren't genetically transferred.

Ben began treatment immediately, but during that time, Lisa fell pregnant with Ben's sister, Ella.

Lisa soon underwent tests, with the oncology team certain Ella too had a Wilms' tumour.

At four months old, and with her older brother in the middle of his own treatment program, Ella had a successful operation to remove pieces of a Wilms' tumour she was born with.

"We've always felt that Ben could have been saved, we just didn't know. "That's really heart-wrenching.

"But while it was too late to save Ben's life, he saved Ella's. Because he was born first and we could recognise the cancer early, we were able to save her."

"He never made things hard for us, even though he could have. Instead, he took everything in his stride, even right through to his last breath.

"He was the bravest little boy. There were very sad moments, but his strength and courage stay with us always," Lisa says.

A MOTHER'S HOPE

Ben passed away on Christmas Eve in 2006, when his sister was only 18 months old.

Ella has now been in remission for 15 years, and regular checkups indicate she's on track with her health. She works two jobs, has a boyfriend and plenty of friends as she continues to enjoy her life.

Her memories of Ben remain, despite losing him at such a young age. The first time she said her brother's name was when she said goodbye to him.

Ella's incredible recovery and survival through research is what drives Lisa's belief that a world of a 100% survival rate with no long-term side effects is possible.

"If Ben had been born today, I have no doubt he would still be with us," she says.

"Losing your child feels like someone has reached in and pulled your heart out. You're left with a hole you can't ever fix, but you have to continue.

"We can get to 100% survival, but we won't unless we have the right funding for researchers to develop the technologies that drive those breakthroughs.

"I truly believe we're so close to treatments that can change the lives of children with cancer. We've come so far and managed to save so many already.

"Every day we live knowing that had Ben been diagnosed today, he would likely have been cured through the incredible research and advances in medical technologies and treatments.

"Let's invest in developing better treatments, so fewer children are robbed of living a long and healthy life, and families are denied the opportunity to continue creating memories with them."

An Engage consultation taking place between patient and nurse.

SEED-FUNDING SURVIVORSHIP

How your generosity helped pave the way for a Federally-funded post-treatment program for childhood, adolescent and young adult cancer survivors.

Through your support, The Kids' Cancer Project prides itself on funding innovative research projects that will make a difference for kids with cancer sooner.

Five-year survival rates for childhood cancer sit at 87%. But for each former patient, survivorship – the point of entering remission until end of life – can be a daunting period, arguably just as difficult as undergoing harsh cancer treatment.

It's why programs like Engage are so critical and one which The Kids' Cancer Project is proud to have funded from its very beginning. Over the last decade, it's grown to include a $1.9 million grant from the Australian Government's Medical Research Future Fund (known as the MRFF) – growth only made possible through your generous support.

It's where your impact continues to make a difference for kids who need it most.

UNDERSTANDING SURVIVORSHIP

Survivorship programs, much like Engage, have been created due to the lifelong impacts cancer treatment can have on a patient. Survivors are at a higher risk of health problems like heart or lung issues, growth and fertility challenges, and even secondary cancers or early mortality compared to the general public.

Psychologically, many face anxiety, depression, and difficulties with learning, memory, and social relationships – making school and social life difficult.

At a time when children are expected to jump back into what is regarded as a "normal life" post-treatment, these issues can arise.

Survivorship care has been seldom developed for adolescents and young adults (AYAs), who used to be categorised as adults.

PREPARING TO ENGAGE

Engage began with a pilot evaluation in 2016 and now overseas 220 survivors. Australian researchers, oncology staff and GPs are now on hand to assist.

Engage is proven to improve survivors' confidence in managing their own needs and improve aspects of their mental health and wellbeing.

A two-time adolescent cancer survivor, speaking anonymously, said Engage assisted in improving their self-management and long-term planning.

"I was totally unprepared to manage my complex health requirements. But with Engage, I was able to transition my health communications to become a well-informed patient with the knowledge and experience to discuss my issues and be heard."

DEVELOPING EXPERT PATIENTS

UNSW Senior Research Fellow and Engage team member, Dr Christina Signorelli, says that the program's primary focus is to give patients the control and confidence to manage their own health.

"By teaching young people how to understand their health needs and communicate effectively with their GPs and other providers, we're helping them become 'expert patients,'" Dr Signorelli says.

"This means they can spot potential problems early, seek help when they need it, and make informed decisions about their care."

"We're not removing healthcare professionals from the picture; we're making it easier for survivors to manage their own care."

YOUR IMPACT

If not for The Kids' Cancer Project's early financial support of Engage, the now Federally-funded project may have never had the chance to realise its potential.

The early investment allowed researchers to gather preliminary data and evidence required to develop ideas and build a strong case for further investment – eventually leading to the $1.9 million MRFF grant.

"Those initial conversations stand out as a pivotal moment for me and the entire team involved in the Engage program. We were driven by big ideas and a deep desire to make a difference for children with cancer," Dr Signorelli recalls.

"We needed the investment of The Kids' Cancer Project and their willingness to believe in our vision, to provide that initial seed funding and bring our idea to life."

"Knowing that an organisation with such a strong commitment to childhood cancer research was backing us gave our team a tremendous sense of purpose and momentum in those early stages.

"Without the foundational support from seed funding provided by The Kids' Cancer Project to Engage, we wouldn't have been able to pursue larger grants and more ambitious projects – including this new funding by the Australian Government."

As a result of the MRFF grant, Dr Signorelli and her team will now be able to create and deliver an innovative cancer survivorship care program tailored specifically for adolescents and young adults.

It is hoped that the investment from the Federal Government will help to support improvements in survivorship care for AYAs, and help build towards broader, more lasting and impactful change in childhood cancer care across Australia.

Visit thekidscancerproject.org.au/research to find out about all the research projects we fund.

UNSW Senior Research Fellow and Engage team member, Dr Christina Signorelli.

Scan the QR code below to learn more about our research projects.

YOUR IMPACT

Over 9,300
bears donated in
the last 12 months

53
research scientists
currently supported

Over 47,000
individual donors in
the last 12 months

Over 1,500
individual fundraisers
in the last 12 months

Over $76M
committed to research
since 2005

429
research projects
funded since 2005


Alan Moyle is a Melbourne-based photographer with over 25 years' worth of experience.

A PICTURE-PERFECT FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE

Alan wanted to do more for kids with cancer. He simply played to his strengths.

The Kids' Cancer Project's community is full of donors, volunteers and fundraisers wanting to do their bit in ensuring more effective treatments.

Alan Moyle is one such fundraiser. The critically acclaimed photographer, who has featured in galleries nationwide, is intent on helping however he can.

Alan first found out about the charity through a friend. After taking photos of families affected by childhood cancer, he recalls there was a day where he decided to do more.

"After working on a few projects, I found myself looking to do something more meaningful."

> **"It was at that point I decided to fundraise for The Kids' Cancer Project."**

Proceeds from his publications *Barkology* and *The Happy Project* have raised $4,000, covering the costs for four clinical trial consultations and expert reviews.

"I think it's important to support charities focused on research that can improve treatment options.

"If we can reduce the need for invasive treatments or make the path to recovery easier, then that's what we want," he says

Over the last 12 months, over 1,000 community fundraisers have helped to raise over $480,000 for vital childhood cancer research through initiatives like the Better Challenge and Fundraise Your Way.

Other events like WA Football's SuperKids SuperHeroes, Sarah Weir's High Tea for a High Cause and Newtown restaurant Delhi 'O' Delhi's annual Good Korma have all helped to raise significant funds.

Campaigns which galvanise the community to action are also a major part of The Kids' Cancer Project's mandate, with over $500,000 raised through its annual K'day donation day.

Significant impact via days like Pirate Day, Crazy Hair and Sock Day and the national Write a Book in a Day competition have resulted in $2 million raised through ongoing community support.

The year ahead promises to be one of even greater impact, with The Kids' Cancer Project's community helping to deliver real progress in scientific research – all while striving together towards a goal of a world where no child dies from cancer.

Help fundraise the change for kids with cancer. Scan the QR code or visit fundraiseyourway.com.au to get involved today!

A NATIONAL IMPACT

Once a predominantly Sydney charity built upon selling raffle tickets, The Kids' Cancer Project is now a truly national entity.

Since Col Reynolds OAM opted to focus on funding research in 2005, The Kids' Cancer Project has continued to expand its national footprint to match its ambition.

While grassroots fundraising remains at the heart of the charity, its evolution has seen an increased presence and prominence drive the organisation to become a fully-fledged national entity.

"National reach is at the very core of our growth," says The Kids' Cancer Project CEO, Owen Finegan, whose influence has been instrumental in the growth of the charity.

"The funding of researchers across the country has led to increased corporate interest and support in each state and territory.

"Cancer is indiscriminate, so our connection to families across Australia – as well as the strategies of both our Research and Partnerships teams working in parallel – ensures a successful national approach.

WOTSO, Investa and Girvan Group are partners that continue to support The Kids' Cancer Project on a national scale and are a constant presence at events.

In 2025, the charity's national corporate events program has grown to include opportunities in four states and one territory, with fundraising events planned across Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania and the entire Eastern seaboard in the next 12 months.

"The cause of curing childhood cancer is greater than one can imagine," Owen says.

"It drives people to do more, to attend events, to dig deep and donate. It is a notion felt amongst those we cherish so dearly within our partnerships network, and we're incredibly grateful for the ongoing support as we continue to grow forward across Australia."

Learn more by visiting thekidscancerproject.org.au/partner-with-us.

See how partnering with us enables research and allows us to create change.

FAMILIAR FELLOWS

Your continued support of The Kids' Cancer Project has helped us commit over $76 million to research in the last 30 years.

In 2024, we announced our inaugural cohort of Col Reynolds Fellows, a group of paediatric cancer researchers backed by a $7.6 million, three-year commitment from The Kids' Cancer Project made possible by your gift.

While research is certainly a long game, these projects have made significant progress since that announcement 12 months ago, with your donations continuing to make a wider impact in the childhood cancer research sector.

DR DAVID MIZRAHI

Based at the University of Sydney, Dr Mizrahi is delivering personalised fitness plans for kids with cancer.

Rolled out in hospitals and Camp Quality recreation camps, the programs are built around diagnosis, physical capabilities, age, maturity level and exercise interest.

The project has three phases: A survey to understand the needs of families and health professionals; the identification of a child's needs post-treatment; and randomised clinical trial scheduled for 2026.

Parental groups from Westmead Children's Hospital and Camp Quality, plus European paediatric exercise oncology researchers have all been sought for feedback. The St. Jude Children's Research Hospital (USA) is also assisting in analysing physical function issues of children with cancer post-treatment, shaping the programs.

DR KATHERINE PILLMAN

UniSA-based computational biologist Dr Pillman is utilising molecular modelling to identify the differences in each neuroblastoma patient's tumours and how these differences impact treatment needs.

Dr Pillman has already identified the gene regulators responsible for developing neuroblastoma cells, while some cancer cell network analysis and target identification has been partially completed. Her work targets proteins that control which genes get turned on or off in a cell, which lead to tumours.

Dr Pillman is now combining and analysing data of different 'omics' levels, while cell line models are also in development, which will help test treatment effectiveness.

Her team has also identified five genetic mutations and six tumour suppressors which could hold the key to stopping neuroblastoma.

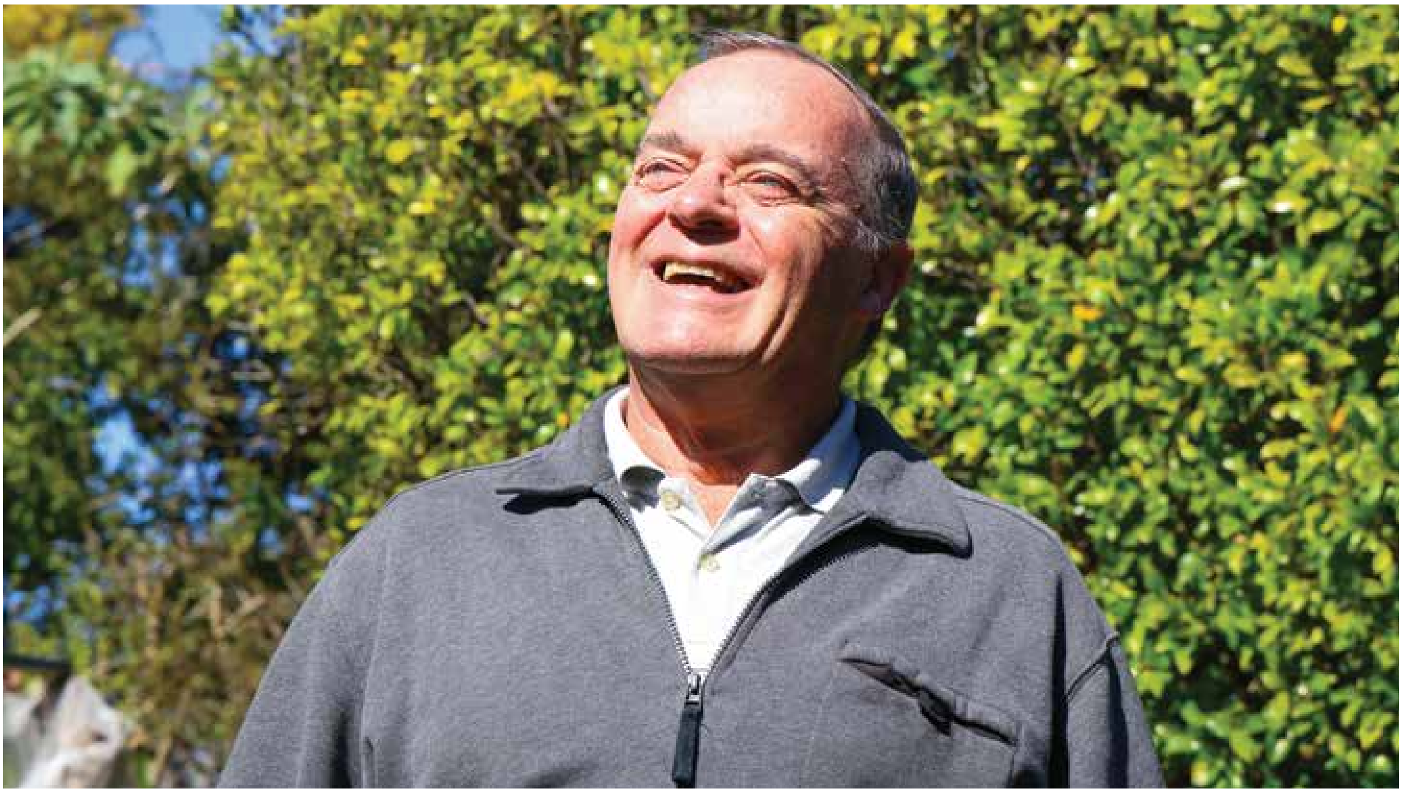
DR TERESA SADRAS

Now running her own lab at the Olivia Newton John Cancer Research Institute, Dr Sadras' research delves into why 10-15% of children diagnosed with B-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia (B-ALL) eventually relapse and no longer respond to treatment.

Current treatment strategies for B-ALL rely on outdated treatments to kill cancer cells, with new and repurposed protocols identified by Dr Sadras and her team helping to inform further research.

Screening of over 2,000 FDA-approved compounds on four sub clonal mutations – different genetic alterations found in cancer cells – has taken place, leading to exciting results! Compounds used to treat adult blood cancers may also work to eradicate leukaemic cells following CAR-T relapse, with more research slated to determine their effectiveness.

Visit thekidscancerproject.org.au/research to learn more about our Col Reynolds Fellows!



The Kids' Cancer Project regular giver, Stuart Bell.

OUR IMPACT TOGETHER

Stuart has been building his impact with us for years. He didn't know that his neighbour was too!

A tight-knit community spread far and wide across the country, our regular givers combined to contribute just shy of $2 million to childhood cancer research in the last financial year.

While donations happen individually, from those that give monthly to those who do so quarterly, there's a unity and shared purpose that brings our regular givers together – taking a small, frequent contribution and turning it into a large, powerful impact.

Two hours north of Sydney lies an area with the postcode 2290 that has been doing just that.

An incredible 17 regular givers all call the Charlestown region home, with the group – who share little in common outside of their postcode and belief in helping create a better world for kids with cancer – contributing over $49,000 to The Kids' Cancer Project in total since signing up.

Two of those locals even live right next door to each other but had no idea of the collective impact they were making together.

Stuart Bell is a recently-retired financier from the region. A former baseballer, he's lived in the area for decades. Between mentoring a young boy at the local school, cleaning the houses of elderly couples and volunteering his time at prisons, he also ensures he donates every month to The Kids' Cancer Project.

Stuart says his sense of altruism was instilled within him from his mother, who taught him to always help those less fortunate than him. Time spent with children in cancer wards at the local John Hunter Hospital was the catalyst for him to donate regularly.

"I've been donating for a few years now. My wife keeps telling me that we've got to scale it back a little bit, but we know it works," he says.

"I think it's pretty important for all of us to look after these kids because they're the generation that's going to step into the world and make it a better place."

"I like to support the kids. They really do suffer, unfortunately. Funding research helps them."

Like all our donors, Stuart knows that funding scientific research into kids' cancers is the only way to truly make a difference in the lives of children living with the insidious disease.

“I just feel good about it because we’re helping both kids and scientists. The more backing these scientists get, the better. I get a kick out of knowing that some of these kids are going to get through their ordeal thanks to research.

“I suppose the biggest thing is it helps. It enforces in me the fact that I’m doing something to help others.”

Next door to Stuart’s number 30 house is Jane Campbell, number 32, who is also making every month matter in the fight against childhood cancer.

They were previously unaware of their shared passion in helping fund vital childhood cancer research and collectively making a lasting impact in helping us realise our dream of no child dying from cancer.

“It’s just terrific,” Stuart says when reflecting on the impact his Charlestown community has had. “Jane’s a lovely lady and a big supporter of The Kids’ Cancer Project, and we’ve been speaking about us supporting the same charity!

“I gave her the news when I went over the other day. She said she just likes to help as well and provide hope for kids with cancer.”

Much like the kids and researchers that frequent these pages, each one of our donors have their own story to tell. Their experiences have shaped their outlook, leading them to The Kids’ Cancer Project, and the need to fund childhood cancer research compels them into continuous action.

Survival starts with you. A monthly donation to The Kids’ Cancer Project allows you to build long-term impact for kids with cancer.

Visit give.thekidscancerproject.org.au to begin your journey.

A bear sits atop of Jane Campbell’s letterbox!

Set up your regular giving today to be part of a bigger contribution to childhood cancer.

Stuart out the front of his Charlestown home.

Our tax-deductible bears are friends for life that come along in a time of need for kids with cancer – see some of our best-sellers which you can send to a hospital near you by visiting thekidscancerproject.org.au/bears.

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Some banks are phasing out cheques before the 2030 Government deadline.

There's lots of other ways you can continue to donate like debit and credit cards, direct deposit, BPay, Post Billpay or by making a contribution online.

The Kids' Cancer Project
Suite 1, Level 1, 789 Botany Road, Rosebery NSW 2018

Postal Address
PO Box 6400, Alexandria NSW 2015

Contact 1800 651 158 | info@tkcp.org.au

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THE KIDS' CANCER PROJECT