

CHICAGO AREA ORGANIZATIONS

To help you navigate issues that arise while you are busy focusing on the health and wellbeing of your family and yourself, we have provided you with a list of various support organizations that offer free services, resources, and support that may be of benefit to your family.

[American Cancer Society](#)

Phone: 800-227-2345, #1
www.cancer.org
(Illinois/National)

The American Cancer Society (ACS) is a nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives and diminishing suffering from cancer, through research, education, advocacy and service. Services include:

- Information--cancer diagnoses and treatment options
- Transportation--for radiation, chemotherapy and surgery appointments, including airline miles, if applicable
- Clinical Trials--matching services for various clinical trials aimed at developing improved treatments
- Lodging--reduced cost lodging (rates vary based on location)

[Bear Necessities Pediatric Cancer Foundation](#)

Contact: Wendy Kazlusky
Phone: 312-214-1200, x25
wkazlusky@bearnecessities.org
www.bearnecessities.org

The mission of the Bear Necessities Pediatric Cancer Foundation is to eliminate pediatric cancer and to provide hope and support to those who are touched by it. Services include:

- Bear Hugs--special experiences for pediatric cancer patients living and/or being treated in Illinois, ages 0-19
- Family Support Services--financial assistance for families struggling economically
- Child/Family Events--Creative Collaborations/patient art day and various social events

[Cal's Angels](#)

Contact: Stacey Sutter
Phone: (847) 960-5317
info@calsangels.org
www.calsangels.org
(Chicagoland)

The mission of Cal's Angels is to grant wishes and provide financial assistance to kids fighting cancer and their families and to make the lives of children fighting pediatric cancer a priority every day. Referrals can be submitted by a medical professional or parent/legal guardian. Services include:

- Wishes--After receiving a submission, a wish representative is in touch within 5-10 business days to discuss and a Cal's Angels volunteer will deliver the wish or meet the child/family at the desired store.
- Financial assistance--Bills up to \$500 that are submitted will be paid directly
- Children can request financial assistance and a wish--both

Eligibility requirements include:

- Age--children up to age 19, treated at Lurie Children's, Cadence Health at Central DuPage or Rush Children's
- Diagnosis--child is diagnosed at time of referral with cancer, or relapsed within the last 12 months

[Cystic Fibrosis Foundation](#)

Contact: Sarah Kwasinski
Phone: 312-236-4491, x114;
800-FIGHTCF
skwasinski@cff.org
www.cff.org
(Illinois/National)

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation (CFF) is the leading organization committed to finding new therapies and ultimately a cure for CF, and to improving the lives of those with the disease. Services include:

- CF Care Center Network--support and accreditation for 115+ specialized treatment centers across the country
- CF Patient Assistance--financial assistance for select FDA-approved medications and medical devices for CF lung disease
- CF Services Pharmacy--personalized services, patient advocacy and reimbursement support
- CF Tax Advice--how to deduct a portion of a CF patient's food expenses that exceed what healthy people spend on food
- Services--CF Legal Hotline, Advocacy efforts and Clinical Trial participation information

[The Cystic Fibrosis Institute](#)

Contact: Lois A. Nelson
Phone: 847-998-3434
lois@wecare4lungs.com
www.cysticfibrosisinstitute.org
(Illinois)

The Cystic Fibrosis Institute (CFI) supports those affected by cystic fibrosis in the Chicagoland area and tries to make a difference by being an active source of assistance and advocacy in dealing with the everyday challenge of cystic fibrosis. Services include:

- Clinical Assistance--programs including mentoring, medication and supplement assistance, and contact information for Services such as clinical care, genetic counselors, dietary consultation, exercise consultation and social services
- Education--materials, newsletters and an annual conference aimed at educating patients, families and the public
- Clinical Trials--hosting independent, federally sponsored NIH research, and pharmaceutical-based multi-center clinical research studies to test the latest treatments to help discover and develop new and more effective treatment strategies
- Advocacy--support/involvement in local, regional and national advocacy efforts, including fundraising event influencing public policy, and increasing awareness Illinois

[Children's Neuroblastoma Cancer Foundation](#)

Contact: Pat Tallungan
Phone: 866-671-2623
info@cncfhope.org
www.cncfhope.org

The Children's Neuroblastoma Cancer Foundation (CNCF) is a non-profit national health organization committed to finding a cure for neuroblastoma through research, education, awareness and advocacy. CNCF initiatives educate the public about a disease dramatically lacking in awareness and funding. It serves as an advocate for families, as well as a liaison between healthcare providers and families. Services include:

- Parent Handbook—a comprehensive guide written by parents to help maneuver a neuroblastoma diagnosis.
- Community Awareness--help to increase awareness of neuroblastoma through fundraising events/marketing
- Annual conference--an educational program for parents and caregivers to discuss current treatment options, results of new research projects and to provide emotional support for children/families dietary consultation, exercise consultation and social services

[Children's Oncology Services, Inc](#)

Contact: Darryl Perkins, Jr.
Phone: 312-235-6838
dperkins@onestepcamp.org
www.onestepcamp.org
(Chicagoland)

Children's Oncology Services, Inc. (COSI) believes that a diagnosis of cancer should not prevent a child from experiencing the simple joys of childhood. Our programs offer fun, friendship and support in a safe and nurturing environment. Services include:

- Camp—Summer Camp, Winter Camp, Sibling Camp, and Family Camp
- Excursions—Utah Ski Trip, Dude Ranch, Whitewater Rafting and Outdoor Adventure, etc.
- Education—advocacy programs (Springfield and Washington D.C.) Scholarships—Tuition Reimbursement scholarships for cancer patients and survivors

[Gilda's Club Chicago](#)

Contact: Elizabeth Healy, LSW
Phone: 312-464-9900, x32
elizabethhealy@gildasclubchicago.org
www.gildasclubchicago.org
(Chicago)

Gilda's Club Chicago is a community where men, women and children who are living with cancer and their families can find support and resources. The center is located in Chicago. Services include:

- Noogieland-- program for children/teens with cancer, with cancer in the family, or have lost a loved one to cancer
- Kid Support--10-week group for children ages 4-12 to help learn to live with the stresses of cancer
- Kids Bereavement--grief group for children ages 4-12 who have lost a loved one from cancer
- Cancer in the Classroom --Free school-based educational and support program for students with cancer or with cancer in the family – customized for elementary, middle and high school students.
- Kids/Teen Camp--summer day-camp
- Family Activities/Social Events—workshops, seasonal parties and outings for children, teens and their families
- Psychosocial Support—wellness sessions/classes including yoga, meditation, art, cooking demos, etc.

[Gilda's Club Quad Cities](#)

Contact: Melissa Wright
Phone: 563-326-7504;
877-926-7504
melissa@gildasclubqc.org
www.gildasclubqc.org
(Quad Cities)

Gilda's Club Quad Cities is a cancer support community providing people living with cancer, and all who touch their lives, access to other people going through the same experience. The center is located in Davenport, IA (but also serves Illinois). Services include:

- Noogieland--a program for children and teens with cancer, with cancer in the family, or have lost a loved one to cancer
- Kid Support--10-week group for children ages 4-12 to help learn to live with the stresses of cancer
- Family Activities/Social Events—workshops, seasonal parties and outings for children, teens and their families
- Psychosocial Support—wellness sessions/classes; ex: yoga, meditation, journaling, massage, etc.

[Greater Illinois Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition](#)

Contact: Jen Misasi, CPNP
Phone: 312-733-8900
jmisasi@horizonhospice.org
www.gippcc.org
(Illinois)

The Greater Illinois Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition (GIPPCC) is a collaboration of over 20 hospitals, home care agencies, hospice programs and individuals that collectively work to increase access to quality inpatient and community-based pediatric palliative care services throughout the state. Services include:

- Information for families about pediatric palliative care and guidance to locate specific programs that can provide supportive services.
- Information for families about bereavement services, including resources for locating bereavement support.
- Continuing education and mentoring services for clinicians who care for children with serious, advanced illnesses.

[Imerman Angels](#)

Contact: Amy Overby
Phone: 312.274.5529 x1303
aoverby@imermanangels.org
www.imermanangels.org
(Illinois/National)

The Imerman Angels (IA) mission is to provide personalized connections that enable one-on-one support among cancer fighters, survivors and caregivers. Services include:

- 1-On-1 Cancer Support--a person fighting cancer is partnered with someone who beat the same diagnosis, providing the fighter the opportunity to receive encouragement and guidance from someone uniquely familiar with the situation
- Caregiver Support--a caregiver of someone fighting cancer is partnered with a caregiver who relates to and can understand their situation

[Leukemia & Lymphoma Society](#)

Contact: Kristi Anys
Phone: 312.568.7728
kristi.anys@lls.org
www.lls.org/il
(Illinois/National)

The mission of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) is to cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and improve the quality of life of patients and their families. Services include:

- Patient Services—diagnosis information, resources and support
- Financial Support—assistance with medical costs/household finances, insurance issues, and employment rights
- School Re-entry—facilitation of communication between physicians, parents, and school personnel to ease the transition of children/teens back to school

[LivingWell Cancer Resource Center](#)

Contact: Christine McMinn, MSEd
Phone: 630.315.6827
cmcminn@livingwellcrc.org
www.livingwellcrc.org
(West Chicagoland)

LivingWell Cancer Resource Center is dedicated to providing people living with cancer and their loved ones the support and educational services they need when faced with a cancer diagnosis. The center is located in Geneva. Services include:

- Support Groups—groups for children/teens with (or impacted by) cancer, parents/guardians, siblings, relatives, and friends
- Wellness—programs to promote mind, body and fitness for cancer patients and caregivers (ex--yoga, reiki, etc.)
- Education—programs for cancer patients and caregivers such as journaling, cooking, knitting, collage-making
- Creative Arts Expression—art/recreation programs such as Time Out

[Make-A-Wish® Illinois](#)

Contact: Dina Thachet, CCLS
Phone: 312-602-9435;
800-978-9474
thachet@illinois.wish.org
www.illinois.wish.org

Make-A-Wish® Illinois grants wishes to children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human spirit with hope, strength & joy. Eligibility requirements include:

- Age--children ages 2½ to 18 (referred prior to 18th birthday) who live in Illinois or who are here for treatment
- Diagnosis—child is diagnosed at time of referral with a life-threatening medical condition; confirmed by physician
- Previous wish--child may not have received a wish from any other wish-granting organization
- Referral source--child can be referred by a parent/guardian/family member, by the child, or a treating medical staff member

[Miracles from Mia](#)

www.miraclesfrommia.org
(Chicagoland)

Miracles from Mia helps children live a happier life by assisting their families whether it be financially or emotionally.

[Muscular Dystrophy Association--Chicago](#)

Contact: Megan Burns
Phone: 312-254-0632
mburns@mdausa.org
www.mdausa.org

The Muscular Dystrophy Association raises funds to defeat more than 40 forms of neuromuscular disease through programs of worldwide research, medical and support services, health education, and advocacy. Services include:

- Clinics—funding two pediatric, multidisciplinary clinics in Chicago with experts that specialize in the diagnosis and management of neuromuscular diseases; providing financial coverage of up to four visits a year
- Summer Camp—kids ages 6-17 can attend a free week of camp in an accessible setting with modified activities
- Support Groups--provide emotional and practical support to families affected by neuromuscular disease
- Medical Equipment—offer financial assistance with equipment repairs and maintain a supply of loaner equipment
- Resources—connection to a community offering referrals, education, advocacy, and general assistance

[Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central IL](#)

Contact: Kelly Thompson
Phone: 217-528-3314
kthompson@rmhc-centralillinois.org
www.rmhc-centralillinois.org
(Central Illinois)

The Muscular Dystrophy Association raises funds to defeat more than 40 forms of neuromuscular disease through programs of worldwide research, medical and support services, health education, and advocacy. Services include:

- Clinics—funding two pediatric, multidisciplinary clinics in Chicago with experts that specialize in the diagnosis and management of neuromuscular diseases; providing financial coverage of up to four visits a year
- Summer Camp—kids ages 6-17 can attend a free week of camp in an accessible setting with modified activities
- Support Groups--provide emotional and practical support to families affected by neuromuscular disease
- Medical Equipment—offer financial assistance with equipment repairs and maintain a supply of loaner equipment
- Resources—connection to a community offering referrals, education, advocacy, and general assistance

[Ronald McDonald House Charities
of Chicagoland & Northwest Indiana](#)

Contact: Kelly Evans, MS, CCLS
Phone: 773-324-5437
kevans@rmhccni.org
www.ronaldhousechicago.org
(Chicagoland)

Our Ronald McDonald Houses provide a "home away from home" for families of pediatric patients receiving treatment in Chicagoland hospitals in an effort to reduce stress, keep the family intact, and enhance the quality of life. Services include:

- Convenient Locations—Ronald McDonald House® near Advocate Children's Hospital in Oak Lawn, Ronald McDonald House® near Lurie Children's Hospital in Chicago, Ronald McDonald House® near Loyola University Medical Center in Hines, Ronald McDonald House® near University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital in Chicago, and Ronald McDonald Family Room® in Edward Hospital in Naperville
- Comfortable Environment—private bedrooms, home-cooked meals and playrooms for children
- Support--non-clinical support services, recreational activities, and sibling support services

[The Cancer Support Center](#)

Contact: Cynthia Turnquest
Phone: 708-798-9171, x204
cturnquest@cancersupportcenter.org
www.CancerSupportCenter.org
(South Chicagoland)

The mission of the Cancer Support Center is to give strength, guidance and support to anyone living with a cancer diagnosis, as well as to their loved ones. Our programs, resources and services are delivered by professional therapists, counselors, nutritionists, and experts, and are provided in a warm, welcoming and nurturing setting at no cost to participants. The Center has two convenient southland locations in Homewood and Mokena. Services include:

- Counseling & Stress Management—individual and supportive counseling, family counseling, art therapy, Kids' Club, bereavement groups, caretakers' groups
- Wellness—Nutrition consultations & classes, wig boutique, yoga, Tai Chi, massage/Reiki/craniosacral, meditation
- Resources—Resource library, networking groups, educational programs, speakers, special events and survivor celebrations

[Twelve Oaks Foundation](#)

Contact: Julie Hupp
Phone: 847-508-1168
Julie@12oaksfoundation.org
www.12oaksfoundation.org
(Illinois)

Twelve Oaks mission is to provide a resource that will help defray the cost of sports and community programs for children of families suffering financial hardship, with a focus on families struggling with the burdens associated in fighting cancer. Working with local organizations, the 12 Oaks Foundation will provide grants to families in need so their kids won't have to miss some of the best parts of childhood. Funds are paid directly to the child's designated organization. Services include:

- Grants that support families battling cancer. We provide financial aid to patients or their siblings (children ages 8-18) whose participation in an athletic or artistic extracurricular activity has been or is at risk of being interrupted by the financial strain of cancer.
- Support may be granted to multiple children in a family. Grants are capped at \$500 per child and \$2000 annually per family.

[Wellness House](#)

Contact: Chelsea Cress, CCLS
Phone: 630-654-5107
ccress@wellnesshouse.org
www.wellnesshouse.org
(West Chicagoland)

Wellness House offers psychosocial support and information as a complement to medical treatment to improve the quality of life and to provide comfort and community so those affected by cancer feel less alone and more empowered. The center is located in Hinsdale. Services include:

- Information/Education--classes, workshops, and speakers about various effects of cancer and ways to cope with the challenges presented by a cancer diagnosis (ex.—'How to answer kids' questions about cancer')
- Family Matters--educational and supportive program to normalize and validate the feelings of children and teens
- Support/Networking--support groups to express thoughts/feelings, and to meet others in similar situations