

**RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN:
WHEN AN ADULT HAS CANCER**

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Children's literature

Our Mom Has Cancer, Abigail and Adrienne Ackerman, American Cancer Society, 800/227-2345, \$8.95. Written by two children whose mother is diagnosed with breast cancer. They discuss their reactions to surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation. The illustrations are simple children's drawings, but capture the emotion of the ups and downs of treatment. This book is hopeful but honest, and is more focused on feelings associated with treatment rather than what treatments are and why they happen.

In Mommy's Garden, Neyal Ammary, Canyon Beach Visual Communications, 2007, OOP*. A mother uses the idea of a garden to explain cancer to her daughter. Cancer is described as weeds. The mother discusses how chemicals and digging the weeds out can kill this plant. She also says that the chemicals used can affect the petals of the flowers. Terms like chemotherapy, operation, and hair loss are not used. This book would be ideal for a parent to read along with their child to explain the meaning of the metaphors. Strengths of this book include the illustrations of people being drawn with blank faces in order for the readers to decide how they think the individual is feeling. Because of the metaphor this book uses and the simple pictures and language, young school-age children would most benefit from being read the story.

The Dandelion Seed, Joseph Anthony, DAWN Publications, 1997, \$7.95. This book is the story of a dandelion seed that fears letting go of the flower. When the wind blows it free the seed learns that the world can be scary, lonely, and beautiful. Once it reaches its new home, it blooms into the dandelion it was meant to be that then spreads its seeds. This book is a beautiful metaphor for those looking to know that in a journey that is scary and lonely a positive ending can await.

Lance Armstrong: The Race of His Life, Kristin Armstrong, Grosset & Dunlap, 2000, \$3.99. Children experiencing cancer may want to know of others that have also experienced the disease, including celebrities. This hopeful Level 3 reading book gives the story of bicyclist Lance Armstrong and how he has overcome challenges throughout his life, including beating cancer.

The Paper Chain, Claire Blake, Eliza Blanchard & Kathy Parkinson, Health Press, 1998, (1-800-643-2665), \$8.95. An excellent book for young children, from late pre-school through school-age, which presents a standard range of events that occur when a mother has cancer. Surgery, hospitalization, chemotherapy and radiation are all discussed. Language level and illustrations are very good; the only disadvantage of this book is that it may present too much information for the younger children, especially since children may be exposed to material which may not be part of their family's cancer experience.

Good Luck, Mrs. K.! Louise Borden, Aladdin Paperbacks, 2002, \$6.99. A story for mid-school-age children about a teacher with cancer, this book fills a gap in the literature. The illustrations and text are well done, and would be helpful to a child whose loved teacher had to leave school because of cancer. This book has a positive ending as the teacher does make a return the next year.

Can I Catch Cancer?, Brittany's Books Publishing, 2007, \$7.95. An attempt to teach the meanings of words such as cells, cancer, malignant, and chemotherapy, using colors, simple concepts, and cute language. This book is visually geared for very young children, but the text would be too difficult for these ages. Older children may be offended by the childishness of the art.

Grandma Kathy Has Cancer. Colleen Buckley, Dog Ear Publishing, 2007, \$11.50. The real life situations presented in this book of a granddaughter and grandmother can help children to understand how cancer can physically affect someone while the individual herself does not change. With emphasis in how the grandchild and grandmother support each other throughout the ups and downs of cancer treatment, this simple and direct story is told through a child's voice alongside cheerful, full-color illustrations.

What Is Cancer Anyway: Explaining Cancer to Children Of All Ages, Karen Carney, Dragonfly Publications, 1998, \$7.95. A book in the Barklay and Eve series. Coloring book format, with lots of information on cancer, radiation and chemotherapy. Addresses cancer in a grandparent. Less focus on questions children might have, but emphasis on all cancers being different and the importance of asking questions. While, the text is appropriate for school-age children they might be offended by the childishness of the main characters being dogs.

When the Boys Ran the House, Joan Carris, Lippincott, 1982, OOP*. Tells the story of four young children who take on household responsibilities while their mother is sick and father is away. Cute, rather silly, for young to middle school-agers. It does address some of the issues children face when a parent is unable to fill normal roles.

Our Family Has Cancer, Too, Christine Clifford, Pfeifer-Hamilton Publishers, 1998, \$6.95. Using cartoon characters, this book is for the 7-12 year old who is dealing with family cancer. The story presents a family in which the mom is diagnosed with cancer and her two sons learn about hospitalization, chemotherapy, radiation, and what changes there will be in their lives. There are good suggestions for adults to help children understand the material.

Someone I Really Love Has Cancer, Dana Cohn and L.E.Murray, self-published, copies available from 203/226-9165, 1999, OOP*. As one of the few books developed for younger children, this book has simple line drawings of animated figures and deals with the changes in a person from cancer and chemotherapy. Common questions that children have are also presented. The father is the person with cancer in this book. It is available in both Spanish and English.

My Mommy Has Breast Cancer, But She Is OK!, Kerri M. Conner, Xylophone Press, 2010. This book is about a girl named Maddie and her relationship with her mother as her mother gets treatment for breast cancer. It addresses her feelings towards her mother's physical and emotional changes such as the way she spends times with her mother, shows her affection towards her, and the differences in her daily routine. These changes are addressed to Maddie by comparing her mother's changes to that of a butterfly with constant confirmation that things are different and difficult but okay. The story is unique in that it features African-American characters and shows a return to normalcy in a mother one year after treatment.

Let My Colors Out, Courtney Filigenzi, American Cancer Society, 2009, \$11.95. This board book tells the story of a young boy who uses color to express his many different emotions as his mother undergoes cancer treatment. As his feelings range from sad to happy to angry, the boy realizes that it's okay to go through a range of feelings and that it is important to let them out. This book is ideal for children ages 2-5.

Tickles Tabitha's Cancer-Tankerous Mommy, Amelia Frahm, Nutcracker Publishing Company, 2001, \$9.95. A great, silly little book that handles young children's emotional reactions to a parent with cancer very well. The only treatment mentioned is "medicine" and most of the book focuses on hair loss, changes in mother's energy, and children's struggles with family changes.

Just the Facts: Cancer, Oliver Gillie, Heinemann Library, 2004. This is a comprehensive and straight-forward guide to cancer that gives an overview of the disease through a description of what it is, its various forms, how people live with it, and treatment options. Personal stories from cancer survivors are throughout the book. Full color photographs accompany the text. Appropriate for older school-age children to teens.

The Valentine's Day Gift, Allison Grace, Chagrin River Publishing, 2005. A first person account of a school-age girl's experience with her mother's breast cancer. It is a very positive upbeat story, but fairly specific to the experiences of this one child. She does talk about her feelings, and what helps her cope, and gives some information on cancer itself. The book is mostly text, with minimal illustrations.

You are Not Alone: Families Touched by Cancer, Eva Grayzel, self published, 2010. An easy to read book featuring a collection of stories from children all over the world who explain what they do to cope with cancer in parents, siblings, relatives, and themselves. In addition to giving suggestions of ways to help deal with feelings, this book may give a child comfort in feeling that they are not alone in having to adapt to the changes that are happening in their family because of cancer.

Becky and the Worry Cup, Wendy S. Harpham, Harper Collins Publishers, 1997. This highly recommended 48 page chapter book for ages 7-10 tells the story of a girl named Becky and how she and her family cope with her mother's lymphoma diagnosis, chemotherapy and its side effects, cancer recurrence, radiation, and adjusting to their "new normal." Highlights of this book include multiple examples of realistic situations that may cause a child to be worried, embarrassed, afraid or angry and the many different ways that a child can cope with them. In addition, the book also uniquely addresses why, even when a parent is in remission, it helps families to not forget about the cancer. The book ends with the positive message that although

lemonade cannot always be made out of lemons, it is important to try and appreciate the positives in life. **When a Parent Has Cancer: A Guide To Caring For Your Children** is the parent accompaniment to this book that explains how to address many of the issues presented in **Becky . . .** ♥

Nana, What's Cancer?, Beverly Hyman Fead and Tessa Mae Hamermesh, American Cancer Society, 2010, \$14.95. This comprehensive book gives a thorough explanation of the medical and emotional aspects of cancer. Designed for school-age children, it is separated into chapters that focus on typical concerns of this age group including whether cancer can be caught, why some cancers are worse than others, whether anyone can get it, and what can be done to prevent cancer. The information given is designed to be both comforting and honest to the reader.

Sammy's Mommy Has Cancer, Sherry Kohlenberg, Magination Press, 1993, \$9.95. A simple story with nice illustrations about a mother with cancer. Appropriate for younger children, but does cover issues of surgery, chemotherapy, hair loss, and return to wellness.

When A Parent is Very Sick, Edna LeShan, Atlantic Monthly, 1986, OOP*. Written for older school-ager or young teen, this book identifies the many responses a child might have to a parent's illness, hospitalization, or death. Special focus is given to living with a chronically ill parent and to mental health problems.

When Someone You Love Has Cancer: A Guide to Help Kids Cope, Alaric Lewis, Abbey Press, 2005, \$7.95. A series of specific statements about the impact of cancer, with illustrations for each concept like "It's O.K. to be mad," "Talking helps," and "Sometimes people don't get better." Each page can be read separately, and the illustrations are younger than the narrative. A good tool for parents who want to chose their own points of emphasis, although younger children would have a hard time skipping specific pages.

The Rainbow Feelings of Cancer: A Book for Children Who Have a Loved One with Cancer, Carrie and Chia Martin, Hohm Press, 2001. A ten year old girl tells about the many feelings that she has concerning her mother's cancer. Her drawings accompany the text.

Someone I Love is Sick, Kathleen McCue, The Gathering Place Press, 2009, \$21.95. This is a customizable book to use when talking with children ages 2-6 years old when a parent or grandparent has cancer. Pages can be selected to address the family's specific situation including diagnosis, treatment, hospitalization, recurrence and, if need be, end of life. It can be used by both families and health care professionals to provide educational information and recognize emotional responses to cancer.

Butterfly Kisses and Wishes on Wings: When Someone You Love has Cancer . . . A Hopeful, Helpful Book for Kids, Ellen McVicker, self-published, 2006, \$16.95. In this well-written story of a boy whose mother has cancer, a clear and honest explanation is given of the disease that is helpfully accompanied by drawings of cells. Surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy are each explained. The book discusses the emotions and questions a child may have and emphasizes what a child can do to help themselves and others when a loved one has cancer. This book also has its own website, butterflykissesbook.com, that has further resources to help a child cope.

Chemo Cat, Cathy Nilon, Ravenna Press, 2007, \$9.95. A story about a cat family in which the mother is diagnosed and treated for breast cancer. The story's simple language can provide a starting point to discuss chemotherapy, changes in physical appearance, and changes in the home. Common questions children ask are addressed as well as some of the emotions they may feel such as sadness, anger, jealousy, and embarrassment. The book ends on a positive note reflecting on the strengths of the family that have helped them cope with cancer.

The Hope Tree: Kids Talk About Breast Cancer, Laura Numeroff and Wendy Harpham, Simon & Schuster, 1999, OOP*. This book uses animal illustrations to familiarize children with some of the significant stress points when a mother has breast cancer. Issues such as reactions to diagnosis, understanding changes, family meetings, dealing with feelings, positive attitudes, etc., are addressed in this book through children's personal stories. This book makes it easy to pick and choose information relevant to the situation of a family. NOTE: This same book is also published as **Kids Talk** by Samsung Telecommunications and Sprint PCS, 1999, OOP*. The content is identical.

When Bad Things Happen: A Guide to Help Kids Cope, Ted O'Neal, Abbey Press, 2003, \$7.95. This book is a series of specific questions and concerns that children can have when bad things happen as well as suggestions for coping. Examples include "However you feel is okay," "Why?," and "Try to forgive." Illustrations are younger than the narrative. God is mentioned throughout the book as a source of support. Each page can be read separately with the illustrations being younger than the narrative. This is a good tool for parents who want to choose their own points of emphasis, although younger children may have a hard time skipping specific pages.

My Mommy Has Cancer, Carolyn Parkinson, Park Press, 1991. A short book for younger children about a boy, Eric, whose mother has cancer. Cells in the body are described as bubbles, and cancer is presented as bad bubbles. Chemotherapy is explained. There is some focus on the sadness the entire family feels, although the book presents hope for the future.

Mommy's In The Hospital Again, Carolyn Parkinson, Solace Publishing, 1994. Great illustrations of a young boy dealing with his mother's cancer. The child is kindergarten age, but much of the language of this book is for somewhat older children. It does deal with a sudden hospitalization and the honest fears and reactions of a young child.

A New Hat for Mommy: Helping Children Express Their Concerns on Cancer, Hannah Grace Perry, BookSurge, 2005, \$10.99. A story of a nine year old girl named Lucy as she experiences her mother having cancer treatment. It explains the meaning of cancer, as well as what happens during hospitalizations and surgery. Questions to ask children about what Lucy and her family are experiencing are included throughout the book. This book is a good resource to start a conversation with children about their feelings and to help them feel that they are not alone. As the book is written with a lot of text in a simple style that discusses both complex issues and Lucy's talking toy cat, it would be ideal for a parent to read to a young child while summarizing its content. It may also be appreciated by older school-age children looking for explanations about cancer, its treatment, and the feelings associated with it.

Daddy Kat gets a Brain Tumor, Melinda Rector, Lulu.com, 2007, \$18.20. This book is the story of a cat who shares her reactions to her father's brain tumor. The story ends with the father going to hospice and dying from his cancer. Children may find the story difficult to follow. The story's references to a cat's multiple lives may not serve to give a clear explanation of death.

When Mommy Had a Mastectomy, Nancy Reuben Greenfield, Bartleby Press, 2005, \$14.95. This well-written book addresses the special connection that a child can have with her mother's breasts and the difficulty she can have in learning about the cancer and need for the breasts to be removed. It also follows the child's role and feelings as her mother has the surgery and experiences the lengthy waiting period of recovery. This story is an excellent choice to prepare a child for a loved one's mastectomy and open up conversation.

When Mama Wore A Hat, Eleanor Schick, Wyeth, 2007, *W. This is a well-written book about two children that have a mother with cancer. The book gives a great deal of attention to the topic of chemotherapy treatment and common concerns and emotions a child has when a parent has cancer. It ends on a positive note with the mother feeling better after her treatments have been completed. This is one of the few stories in which the parent is single.

When Mommy Is Sick, Ferne Sherkin-Langer, Albert Whitman and Company, 1995, OOP*. Although not specifically about cancer, this is a very good little book which addresses many of the concerns a child has when a mother is sick and is hospitalized. Great illustrations and language level for younger children, and could be safely used to address separation concerns and coping for children facing any type of parental illness.

Cancer & Kids, Rae Simons, AlphaHouse Publishing, 2009. This comprehensive book defines cancer, explains the different types, discusses its various causes and methods for diagnosis, and provides information on ways to protect oneself against cancer and help to find a cure. A real life story is also provided about a family experiencing childhood cancer.

The Year My Mother Was Bald, Ann Speltz, Magination Press, 2002 \$9.95. Nicely written book for mid- or older-school age children when a mother has breast cancer. Quite specific to diagnosis, with lots of medical information. Does emphasize emotions, questions, and changes that occur for a child in this age group.

Max's Daddy Goes to the Hospital, Danielle Steele, Delacorte Press, 1989. This book is the story of four year old Max and how he copes with his father's hospitalization and injuries after he breaks his arm and leg while firefighting. Although this book does not focus on the topic of cancer, children may be able to relate to the emotions of Max and his mother when they find out his father is injured, Max's feelings and questions about having to wait to visit his father in the hospital, the experience of Max first seeing his father injured and with an IV, and the wait for his father to recover.

Mom and the Polka-Dot Boo-Boo: A Gentle Story Explaining Breast Cancer to a Young Child, Eileen Sutherland, American Cancer Society, 2007. A very simple story that is ideal for young children in explaining breast cancer, "special medicine," the feelings a parent might have, and return to wellness. Children's drawings accompany the rhyming text.

Hair for Mama, Kelly A. Tinkham, The Penguin Group, 2007. This comforting and humorous book is about a boy whose mother has cancer. Because of her hair loss, she does not want to be in the family photo. Her son Marcus makes it his mission to find her hair so that she will be in the photo and wishfully, feel better. The story's resolution of the boy talking to his mother about his feelings helps him to learn why hair loss occurs and address his underlying concerns for his mother. Full page watercolor pictures illustrate the story. It is one of the few picture books available that features an African-American family.

When Eric's Mom Fought Cancer, Judith Vigna, Albert Whitman and Company, 1993, OOP*. The story of a young boy whose mother has breast cancer. Surgery and chemotherapy are addressed, and good examples of guilt and anger on the part of the child are provided. Daddy plays an important role in this book in supporting his son.

Where's Mom's Hair?: A Family's Journey Through Cancer, Debbie Watters, Second Story Press, 2005, \$12.95,. This is a family's story about a mother's cancer, illustrated by actual photographs of the diagnosis, hair loss and chemotherapy. The text is simple and told from a child's point of view, and the emphasis of this book is on hair loss and re-growth, with a sense of celebration for the end of treatment.

Mira's Month, Deborah Weinstein-Stern, BMT Newsletter, 1994, (1-708-831-1913), OOP*. A simple story about a four-year old whose mother has cancer and has to be in the hospital for one month. Issues around missing mom, visiting the hospital and coping with separation are addressed, and there is a happy reunion in the end.

Promises, Elizabeth Winthrop, Clarion Books, 2000, \$16.00. Good focus on emotions and reactions of a young child, especially anger and confusion. This book does not use the word "cancer," but describes side effects of treatment, especially hair loss, and sudden hospital stays. Emphasis is on the disruption to a child's life when mother is sick.

Once Upon A Hopeful Night, Risa Yaffe, Oncology Nursing Press, 1998, \$7.00. This small book is the story of a mother's cancer, told in poetic verse, with line-drawn illustrations which are fairly mature in their depiction of the experience of cancer. Good for school-age children.

Not reviewed:

Upside Down Cake, Carol Carrick, Clarion, 1999, OOP*.

Our Daddy's Cancer: How We Helped Him Fight, Dana-Susan Crews, Tate Publishing & Enterprises, 2007 \$9.34.

Metu and Lee Learn About Breast Cancer, Shenin Sachedina, Medical Education Products, 2001, \$17.16.

Michael's Mommy Has Breast Cancer, Barbara Watler, Hibiscus Press, 1999, \$10.95.

My Mummy Wears a Wig – Does Yours?, Michelle Williams-Huw, Accent Press, Ltd., \$15.97.

Children's activity workbooks

My Daddy's Cancer, Cindy Cohen and John Heiney, Promise Publications, 1999, \$9.95.

Written by a child life specialist, this book is a combination storybook and workbook for young school-age children that covers the most common reactions to a father's cancer. The drawings are very simple, but do provide the opportunity for coloring. There is information on hospitalization, and some good ideas for practical ways to help children cope.

Life Isn't Always A Day At The Beach, Pam Ganz, High Five Publishing, 1996, (1-402-489-6060) OOP*. A workbook in which school-age children can draw and write their feelings about cancer in the family. The book focuses on cancer questions, changes in the family, self-esteem and coping.

When Someone Has A Very Serious Illness, Marge Heegaard, Woodland Press, 1991, \$9.95.

An activity book which encourages interaction between adults and children around reactions of the child to a serious family illness. This book can be used by any age child, but can only be used independently by mid-school-age children and up. It provides simple education about illness, encourages exploration of the specifics of the child's individual family situation, and focuses on feelings related to illness. Includes opportunities to draw and write.

My Book About Cancer: A Workbook to Help Children Deal With the Diagnosis and Treatment of a Father With Cancer, Rebecca Schmidt, Oncology Nursing Society, 2003,

\$6.00. This is a workbook for children to complete which addresses the issues of a father with cancer. It is one of very few tools that identify the father as the person with cancer. It is illustrated with animal characters, and offers opportunities for drawing and writing. The language is quite simple, and this book would be useable by young school-agers. ✓

My Book About Cancer: A Workbook to Help Children Deal With the Diagnosis and Treatment of a Mother With Cancer, Rebecca Schmidt, Oncology Nursing Society, 2003,

\$6.00. This is a workbook for children to complete which addresses the issues of a mother with cancer. It is illustrated with animal characters, and offers opportunities for drawing and writing. The language is quite simple, and this book would be useable by young school-agers.

Talking With My Treehouse Friends About Cancer, Peter R. Van Dermoot, Fulcrum

Publishing, 2007, \$9.95. A workbook for children to complete which addresses the issue of a parent having cancer. It provides simple education about illness and treatment, encourages exploration of the specifics of the child's individual family situation, focuses on feelings related to illness, and discusses people that the child can talk to in order to help him cope. There are opportunities in the book for writing, coloring, and crafts. ✓

Not reviewed:

Someone Special Is Very Sick (grades K-2), OOP*, **When Someone Is Very Sick** (grades 3-4), OOP*, **When Sickness Happens** (grades K-4), OOP* All from Boulden Publishing, Weaverville, CA. 800/238-8433

Things Change All The Time...When Someone You Know Has Cancer, CancerEd, 1998, 1-800-221-3170, OOP*

My Mommy's Cancer, Cindy Cohen and John Heiney, Promise Publications, 1999, \$9.95. A companion book to My Daddy's Cancer, above. Content is similar.

Kemo Shark, Kidscope, Mass Market Paperbacks, 1995, OOP*

My Book About Cancer: A Workbook to Help Children Deal with the Diagnosis and Treatment of a Father with Cancer, Rebecca Schmidt, Oncology Nursing Society, 2003.

My Book About Cancer: A Workbook to Help Children Deal with the Diagnosis and Treatment of a Mother with Cancer, Rebecca Schmidt, Oncology Nursing Society, 2003.

Teen literature

Brushing Mom's Hair, Andrea Cheng, Wordsong, 2009, \$17.95. This collection of poems tells the story of a 15 year old girl during her mother's diagnosis and treatment for breast cancer. It is a well-written and quick read that addresses the many experiences and feelings that a child faces when a parent has cancer such as worry, helplessness, loneliness, adjusting to a new normal, forming relationships with friends and family, waiting for answers, and having hope.

Teen's Guides: Living with Cancer, ZoAnn Dreyer, Checkmark Books, 2008. This comprehensive and straight-forward guide to cancer gives a thorough overview of the disease as it pertains to teens that have the disease or have a loved one with cancer. Information is given on what cancer means, how cancer is caused, genetic risks, methods of diagnosis, treatment options, preventing cancer, supporting others with the disease, and paying for care. A large appendix is also included with many resources to help people with the disease.

Just the Facts: Cancer, Oliver Gillie, Heinemann Library, 2004. This is a comprehensive and straight-forward guide to cancer that gives an overview of the disease through a description of what it is, its various forms, how people live with it, and treatment options. Personal stories from cancer survivors are throughout the book. Full color photographs accompany the text. Appropriate for older school-age children to teens.

What Every Young Person Should Know About Cancer, Anne Jordheim, PPT Publishing, 1997, OOP*. A small paperback book which gives older children a comprehensive overview of cancer in general. This book is medically focused, and would be very useful for a teen that is writing a school report on cancer or has some personal fears about cancer.

When A Parent is Very Sick, Edna LeShan, Atlantic Monthly, 1986. Written for an older school-age child or young teen, this book identifies the many responses a child might have to a parent's illness, hospitalization, or death. Special focus is given to living with a chronically ill parent and to mental health problems.

Both Sides Now, Ruth Pennebaker, Henry Holt and Company, 1999, \$16.95. This novel tells the story of Liza, a teen who prides herself on her responsibility, success and optimism. When there is a recurrence of her mother's breast cancer, Liza, her sister, and her father focus on thinking positively and remaining strong while her mother works to accept the reality of the situation. Tensions grow between the mother and her family as she challenges them to also express their fears and feelings, even to themselves. The more Liza resists, the more the strain of the situation affects her driver's training, work on the school newspaper, friendships, and values. When Liza does finally have a meltdown she realizes the value of expressing how she feels and the unique strength her mother possesses. The book's ending is both bittersweet and empowering. Appropriate for children ages 12 and up.

Breast Cancer: Questions And Answers For Young Women, Carole Vogel, Twenty-First Century Books, 2001, OOP*. A book for teen girls specifically about breast cancer. Gives a medical summary of breast development, healthy breasts and breast cancer. This book discusses the concerns girls have if a mother has breast cancer, and reflects on emotional reactions as well as medical realities.

Melanie Martin Goes Dutch: The Private Diary of My Almost Bummer Summer with Cecily, Matt the Brat, and Vincent van Go Go Go, Carol Weston, A Yearling Book, 2002, \$5.99. In this fun and well written novel, fifth-grader Melanie and her family find out they get to go to Holland for vacation. When Melanie's best friend Cecily's mother gets a diagnosis of breast cancer, they invite Cecily along on the trip as her mother undergoes surgery. Although Melanie was initially excited, for the trip, once in Amsterdam, Melanie feels that everything is going wrong. Her experiences of being with her friends and family and coping with her friend's mother's health helps her to learn how to build positive relationships with those around her and re-evaluate her perspective on viewing life.

Why Me? Coping With Family Illness, Anna Kosef, F. Watts, 1986, OOP*. For the teen, this book presents interviews and examples of various young people who are coping with serious illness, either their own or a member of their family. Several good summaries of responses to parental illness.

Not reviewed

The C-Word: Teenagers and Their Families Living With Cancer, E. Dorfman, New Sage Press, 1994, OOP*

Adult literature

When Life Becomes Precious, Elise Babcock, Bantam Books, 1997, \$18. A comprehensive guide to various situations faced in families dealing with cancer. One chapter is specifically directed toward children, but there are helpful hints all through the book.

Moms Don't Get Sick, Pat Brack with Ben Brack, Melins Publishing Corp, 1990, OOP*. An excellent description of one woman's reactions to the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer. This book focuses on the needs of the author's 10-year-old son, and his comments are included. Emphasis is placed on emotional reactions of all members of the family to cancer, and various coping styles and techniques are introduced. This book could be read to or along with school-age children.

The Goldfish Went On Vacation, Patty Dan, Trumpeter, 2007, \$9.56. A very good true story of the wife and young son of a man who is diagnosed and ultimately dies of a brain tumor. Excellent for parents of preschool children who must make decisions about how much to tell their young children, and what kind of help and support those children might benefit from.

When A Parent Has Cancer: A Guide To Caring For Your Children, Wendy Harpham, Harper-Collins, 1997, \$14.95. A very readable book which documents one mother's cancer journey. This book makes specific suggestions for responding to children's questions and needs, and is accompanied by a children's book, **Becky and the Worry Cup**, which helps older school-age children understand the concepts included in the book.

Cancer In The Family: Helping Children Cope With A Parent's Illness, Sue Heiney, Joan Herman, Katherine Bruss and Joy Fincannon, American Cancer Society, 1/800-227-2345, 2001, www.cancer.org, \$18.95. This excellent handbook guides parents through many of the steps in helping their children deal with cancer. There are sections on talking initially about the diagnosis, explaining treatment, and dealing with changes, both positive and negative. There is a very good description about the professional interventions available to children and adults.

How to Help Children Through a Parent's Serious Illness, Kathleen McCue, St. Martins Press, 1994, \$14.95. A manual which leads parents step-by-step through the needs of children at different ages and different stages of family illness. The reader can easily find just the information pertinent to a specific family situation, and many examples are given of words to use and activities to try to help children cope.

Can I Still Kiss You? : Answering Your Children's Questions About Cancer, Neil Russell, Health Communications, 2001, \$8.95. The author draws on his own experiences having cancer to explain to other parents the language they can use to help relate the diagnosis and the parent's experiences to children. The book also discusses resources available to help the family understand, cope with, and grow from the cancer experience. Space is provided in the book to encourage a parent's own story writing.

A Tiny Boat At Sea, Izetta Smith, Centering Corporation, www.centering.org, 402/553-1200, 2000. This book is published by one of the largest resource centers for grief and loss. However, this particular small paperback deals with helping children when a parent is diagnosed with cancer. It includes easy-to-read suggestions and some unique descriptions of how children show emotion and the importance of play in children's ability to maintain wellness.

Helping Your Children Cope With Your Cancer: A Guide For Parents and Families, Peter Van Dernoot, Hatherleigh Press, 2002, \$15.95. This book is a compendium of writings by both professionals and parents, providing an overview of issues that occur in a family when a parent has cancer. There are brief discussions about support groups for children, and some suggestions for communicating with children.

Not reviewed

Afraid To Ask: A Book For Families To Share About Cancer, Judy Fine, Compassion Books, 704/675-5909, OOP*.

Raising An Emotionally Healthy Child When a Parent Is Sick, Paula Rauch, McGraw-Hill, 2006, \$14.95.

Pamphlets for Children and Adults

Coping With The Effects Of Serious Illness: A Guide For Parents And Guardians, Boulding Publishing, 1-800-238-8433

Helping Children Understand: A Guide For A Parent With Cancer, American Cancer Society, 1-800-ACS-2345, www.cancer.org

It Helps To Have Friends When Mom Or Dad Has Cancer, American Cancer Society, 1-800-ACS-2345, www.cancer.org

Helping Children Understand Cancer: Talking To A Child About Cancer, Cancer Care, www.cancercare.org

Kid's Worry Too!, Child Life Department, Nebraska Health System, 1-402-559-6775

What's Happening To Mom? Helping Children Cope With Breast Cancer, The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, 1-800-462-9273, www.breastcancerinfo.com

What About Me: A Booklet For Teenage Children Of Cancer Patients, Cancer Family Care, Inc., 1-513-731-3346

When Someone In Your Family Has Cancer, NIH Publications, 1-800-4-CANCER Originally Developed, June, 2004; updated, July, 2008

*OOP means that this book is out of print, according to Amazon.com. The book may be found at libraries or may be available from the publisher, especially in the case of small private publishers.