

## Educator's Resource: Ways You Can Support A Family

### **Recommendations You Can Make**

- ☑ Ways to help the child or teen **stay involved in after-school activities or sports and in contact with friends**: Remind the child that it's still OK to have fun. Encourage parents to voice this as well: *“There will be times when you are at school or playing that you will forget that Mommy is sick. This is normal. You can't think about it all of the time, and she wouldn't want you to.”*
- ☑ Ways to help the child or teen **manage school assignments and deadlines**: Help prioritize work and monitor progress, arrange study buddies, find support for homework outside of school, and have flexible deadlines when needed.
- ☑ How to help the family **manage special requests from the school** (e.g., trip forms, extra supplies/materials, special events/days): Enlist help from parents of the child's friends.

### **Activities and Actions**

- ☑ **Start a support group** for students living with cancer in their families, or find a support group in the community or at the cancer centre and advertise it in the school.
- ☑ **Sensitively, and only if the child/teen wishes, speak to the class** about cancer and the family's situation. Send a note home to inform parents of the other students of what is being discussed in class. If needed, a psychosocial oncology expert may be available to attend the class to explain what is going on. When it is a child with cancer, pediatric oncology specialists frequently work with schools to help kids and their classmates. Contact your local cancer centre.
- ☑ If the family wishes, **facilitate ongoing communication** about the family's circumstances with school staff (teachers, guidance counsellors, administration, etc). This will be more or less challenging depending on the size and type of school, and the existing channels of communication.
- ☑ Be prepared (and help prepare other staff) to **answer questions about cancer** from kids in the school.
- ☑ Use the form on the following page as a discussion and support guide.

### **If You Need More Information**

- ☑ Locate someone in the cancer program in your community to act as a resource if you have questions about cancer or about a child's situation.

## Teacher Education and Awareness Materials



# Sibling TEAM Form

This Sibling TEAM form is to be used as a discussion guide for each of your *SuperSibs!* children or teens together with their teachers or counselors. This conversation and support plan can help the school team understand what your child or teen knows about his/her brother or sister's cancer, learn of the potential challenges the student is facing, and create a supportive plan to maximize sibling coping, healing and school success. Make additional copies as needed.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Teachers and Counselors names: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of brother or sister who is sick: \_\_\_\_\_

When did he/she get sick: \_\_\_\_\_

What does he/she have: \_\_\_\_\_

What do you know about this illness: \_\_\_\_\_

How is your family different now? \_\_\_\_\_

Who takes care of you or is with you most of the time? \_\_\_\_\_

What additional grown-up things do you now do at home?

(For Teens: What additional responsibilities do you now have at home or outside the home?)

What do you want your teachers to know? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you want your friends to know? \_\_\_\_\_

What has been the hardest thing about school while your brother/sister is sick?

What are 3 things that your teacher/school could do to help you the most:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Form Completed by:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_