

# MYTHS vs FACTS: Childhood Cancer Survivors

## MYTH

## FACT



X Survivors are disease carriers and pose health risks to others.



✓ Childhood cancer isn't contagious: it's not transmitted by a virus, nor is it infectious. It's safe to play, socialize and interact with childhood cancer survivors.



X All survivors are genetically inferior and have fertility problems. They can never have children



✓ Some survivors may have fertility and reproductive issues, but this isn't true for most survivors, as the type of cancer and its treatment determines if they'll have any fertility challenges.



X Survivors have short lives.



✓ While two out of three childhood cancer survivors are at increased risks for late effects and secondary cancers, this isn't linked to life expectancy.

The nature and severity of subsequent late effects also influences life expectancy.

Reductions in life expectancy depend on:

- How timely the cancer diagnosis was,
- What the initial treatment was, and
- The appropriateness of the treatment received.



X Childhood cancer survivors are cured. Survivors no longer need continuing, follow up care.



✓ Continuing follow up care remains important for survivors. They are at higher risk for secondary cancers, or chronic health conditions related to their initial cancer treatment.

Vigilance and regular monitoring are critical for early identification and treatment of any health challenge, or impairment.



X Childhood cancer survivors will have a miserable, sad and dismal future. They can't ever have a normal life.



✓ There's life and a future after cancer. There's a 'new normal' after surviving childhood cancer.

Most survivors are able to return to school and regular activities after treatment.

Survivors can effectively reintegrate with family, friends and their communities.

Their adjustment to life after cancer becomes much easier, more fulfilling and happier, with a circle of supportive care from family members, teachers, carers, peers, friends, neighbors and the community at large.



X Survivors do poorly in school and employment.



✓ There are survivors who may have cognitive and learning disabilities, but this is not true for everyone.

Most survivors are high performing achievers who do very well in their education and career.



X It's better if children and adolescents with cancer aren't told they have cancer.



✓ They need to be informed. There's age appropriate information which can be shared with them to help them understand their condition.

This is especially crucial for teens and young adults. They need to feel empowered and able to take charge of their own health and well-being.



X Childhood Cancer Survivors will always carry the stigma of cancer in their adult life. They'll always be discriminated against in society and in marriage and employment.



✓ In most countries, survivors are looked up to and viewed as heroes and warriors who courageously overcame cancer. They're viewed positively and seen as living proof that childhood cancer can be conquered.

In countries where discrimination and stigma still exists, survivors and their supporters need to stand up, speak out and challenge the stigma; share their stories and show the reality of their new lives.

Education, information and real life stories are powerful tools to break stigma and eliminate discrimination.



#domorecaremore4survivors #togetherstronger  
#iccsww #celebratelife #celebratesurvivors  
#betterlivesbeterfutures #nooneleftbehind



[www.internationalchildhoodcancerday.org](http://www.internationalchildhoodcancerday.org)



[www.childhoodcancerinternational.org](http://www.childhoodcancerinternational.org)

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