

Identify your needs

Each family has unique needs depending on many different factors such as; the number of children you have, your financial situation and whether or not you have transportation. Some of your changing needs may be simple to address, such as grocery shopping, running errands and doing laundry. Some may take a little coordinating, like arranging a meal schedule for the first couple of weeks or helping you get to appointments. Friends may be able to provide food donations or donate gas or grocery cards. The first couple of months are a huge adjustment period and you should not be bashful about asking for help.

Some families need to make emergency arrangements for siblings. Although your goal is to keep the flow of life as normal as possible, there may be times when you are delayed at the hospital or have an unexpected hospital visit. It might be a good idea to identify someone ahead of time who can help with picking siblings up from daycare or school.

You may need help with Pets or just watering the plants if you are staying at the hospital. Maybe you could use some assistance with transportation. The first step towards creating a support plan is to identify your needs!! That help may come in the form of something physical or be more spiritual in nature.

We encourage you to create a list of ways in which people can help you, remember that you will be spending much more time at the hospital and taking care of your child's changing needs.

"I had a friend come to help me clean the house from time to time, this helped me to keep my house free of germs and afforded me more time at home with Gabe".

– Lu

"You can also ask someone to come and get your laundry or run errands for you. Maybe someone can come and sit with your child while you take a shower or just go for a little walk outside of the hospital fresh air did wonders for me."

– Kim

"We relied a lot on friends & family preparing meals for us. We especially needed them whenever we would come home from a hospitalization. Usually it would be right around supper time when we'd get home and the last thing I wanted to do was fix something to eat".

– Tiffany

"Everyone can't provide dinner next Tuesday, but they can pray, which is something we always asked for".

– Scott and Jennifer

Identify Your Support Group

So many parents and caregivers feel guilty asking for, or accepting help. We pride ourselves on being self sufficient and independent. When a devastating event such as a diagnosis of cancer happens to a family, everyone's physical and emotional needs change. Suddenly we find ourselves needing help in one way or another, there is definitely no shame in that. **Some families are lucky enough to be able to rely on family who live close; like Scott, Jennifer and Tiffany:**

When family does not live geographically close, it can make things a little more complicated. But if friends and neighbors are aware or your circumstances they are usually just waiting to be asked to step up and help in any way they can.

It can feel awkward to ask for help, but remember that it makes friends feel better to know that they are able to help you in any small way. You can also develop closer friendships with the friends who feel like part of your support group.

Our families re-iterated time and time again that if possible, you should find a way to get around feeling guilty and rely on friends for help...

"My Mother in law sort of organized it for us and made sure that she was at our house when the food was dropped off and put it away, so all we'd have to do was heat it up. So nice!"

– Tiffany

"Jennifer had a few "go to" people, and was able to get the help we needed from them. There were a few times where she was hesitant to ask when they had just helped out two days ago, but when the offer is genuine, you can't be afraid to ask".

– Scott and Jennifer

Some friends find remarkable ways to find help for your family: Most families however find that it is co-workers, neighbors, church or temple communities that step up to provide assistance. Try to write down some ideas so that when you are asked you can provide friends with ideas of how to best help your family.

"I have a problem asking people for help, I feel guilty when people do things for me or my family things that I feel I should be doing but the one thing I learned was that your friends, family and people you have never met before will be coming through the walls to do things for you, so get over how it makes you feel and just ask".

– Kim

SUPPORT PLAN

Identify people who can assist with certain tasks, do not be afraid to ask, most people are looking for ways to help. It helps to have someone to talk to; this could be a family member or friend. Sometimes it is hard to talk to friends or family who are all close to the situation. You may also find that it is hard for them to understand your life now as you are experiencing something most people do not like to think about, let alone talk about. If you find yourself feeling alone or disconnected from family and friends, ask hospital social workers or child life staff if they can recommend a mentor family or support groups in the area.

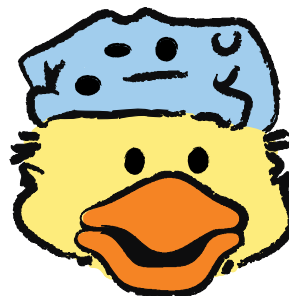
"If someone calls to ask what you need or what you or your child would like tell them to get you some gift cards to use at Ben and Jerry's, Subway, McDonald's, or Taco Bell/Pizza Hut. That will help you with money issues faced while in the hospital."

– Kim

"A friend put a full page ad in the community newspaper, and we had some help based on that".

– Scott and Jennifer

gabe's
CHEMO DUCK
PROGRAM



SUPPORT PLAN

AREA OF NEED

SUPPORT PARTNER

PHONE#

MEALS PREPARED AND DELIVERED _____

CLEAN THE HOUSE _____

LAUNDRY _____

GROCERY GIFT CERTIFICATES _____

MOW LAWN _____

UNEXPECTED HOSPITAL VISIT/STAY

AREA OF NEED

SUPPORT PARTNER

PHONE#

RESTAURANT GIFT CERTIFICATES _____

TAKE CARE OF PETS _____

WATER PLANTS _____

SCHEDULED HOSPITAL STAY

AREA OF NEED

SUPPORT PARTNER

PHONE#

SIT WITH CHILD SO I CAN _____

TAKE A BREAK _____

SUPPORT PLAN

RESTAURANTS GIFT CERTIFICATES TO USE:

NOTES:

USEFUL GIFTS FOR HOSPITAL STAYS:

NOTES:

FAVORITE MEALS:

NOTES:

DON'T FORGET THE SIBLING:

NOTES:

SUPPORT PLAN

SIBLINGS SCHEDULES

CHILD _____

SCHOOL _____ MONDAY-FRIDAY _____

ACTIVITY#1 _____ CONTACT _____ PHONE# _____

DAY _____ LOCATION _____

ACTIVITY#2 _____ CONTACT _____ PHONE# _____

DAY _____ LOCATION _____

CHILD _____

SCHOOL _____ MONDAY-FRIDAY _____

ACTIVITY#1 _____ CONTACT _____ PHONE# _____

DAY _____ LOCATION _____

ACTIVITY#2 _____ CONTACT _____ PHONE# _____

DAY _____ LOCATION _____

CHILD _____

SCHOOL _____ MONDAY-FRIDAY _____

ACTIVITY#1 _____ CONTACT _____ PHONE# _____

DAY _____ LOCATION _____

ACTIVITY#2 _____ CONTACT _____ PHONE# _____

DAY _____ LOCATION _____

CHILD _____

SCHOOL _____ MONDAY-FRIDAY _____

ACTIVITY#1 _____ CONTACT _____ PHONE# _____

DAY _____ LOCATION _____

ACTIVITY#2 _____ CONTACT _____ PHONE# _____

DAY _____ LOCATION _____