

**Cancertalk**  
**teaching pack**  
Introduction and guidance

**WE ARE  
MACMILLAN.  
CANCER SUPPORT**



# Acknowledgements

Macmillan Cancer Support wishes to thank the following people and organisations for their support with the Cancertalk programme:

All the people who allowed us to include their experiences of having cancer

All the Macmillan professionals and supporters who gave their expert advice

The teachers, students and education consultants who reviewed, commented on and provided ideas for the materials

The Butterfly Programme, Children's Cancer Unit, Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle

Cancerbackup

Cancer Research UK

CLIC Sargent

UKCCSG (UK Children's Cancer Study Group)

CanTeen Ireland

Marie Curie Cancer Care

Orchid Cancer Appeal

# Contents

All about Macmillan	04
Introduction to Cancertalk	05
We are online	06
Using the DVD	07
Cancertalk week	12
Fundraising for Macmillan Cancer Support	13
Parents, carers and guardians – get them involved!	15
Talking to your pupils about cancer	16
Assembly template	17
Further information about cancer	18
Frequently asked questions	22
Useful publications	23
Useful contacts	24
Glossary	27

# All about Macmillan

**Macmillan Cancer Support improves the lives of people affected by cancer. One in three of us will get cancer. 1.2 million of us are living with it. We are all affected by cancer. We can all help. We are Macmillan.**

As treatments improve, more and more people are living with cancer in their daily lives. This means they need more than medical help – they also need practical, emotional and financial support.

## **We are a source of support**

We are a source of support, helping with all the things that people affected by cancer want and need. It's not only patients who live with cancer, so we also help carers, families and communities. We guide people through the system, supporting them every step of the way. We fund nurses and other specialist health care professionals and build cancer care centres. But we give so much more than medical help.

People need practical support at home, so we provide anything from some precious time off for a carer, to a lift to hospital. People need emotional support, so we listen, advise and share information through our Macmillan CancerLine, YouthLine, website, support groups and trained professionals. People need financial help to cope with the extra costs cancer can bring, so we give benefits advice, and grants for anything from heating bills to travel costs. Together we listen, we learn, we act to help people live with cancer.

## **We are a force for change**

We are a force for change, listening to people affected by cancer and working together to improve cancer care. People who live with cancer are experts by experience.

Together we use this knowledge to make a positive difference to the lives of people affected by cancer. This could be anything from getting a coffee machine installed in a waiting room, to bringing about changes in the law.

We fight discrimination – from challenging unfair travel costs and insurance policies to improving the national benefits system. Together we challenge the status quo, we push for change, we lead the way.

## **We are Macmillan**

We believe we can all help. We can raise money – through marathons, coffee mornings, street collections, sponsored events. We can give time – at cancer care centres, events, fundraising groups. We can share experiences – online, in the media, with each other. We are Macmillan.

# Introduction to Cancertalk

**Every school community is affected by cancer in some way. Maybe a teacher, parent, grandparent or a pupil in your school has been diagnosed with the illness.**

At Macmillan Cancer Support we know that teachers sometimes find it difficult to talk to children and young people about cancer. But we also know it's essential that they learn about a subject that affects us all. So we worked with teachers, pupils, education specialists, medical professionals and psychologists to develop this *Cancertalk teaching pack*.

Cancertalk will give you the information you need to introduce the subject confidently and discuss it in the classroom. It will help you teach about cancer and its treatment, healthy lifestyle choices and fundraising with children and young people. We hope it will also help you to encourage your school to develop an open and supportive approach to serious illness in the community.

## Use the *Cancertalk teaching pack* to help you:

- educate your class/school about cancer
- reduce the fear surrounding cancer and encourage pupils to talk about it
- offer your class ways to cope with serious illness – if it affects them or people around them
- show your class/school how they can support people affected by cancer
- encourage your class/school to make healthy lifestyle choices to help reduce their risk of getting cancer.

The topics covered are suitable for you to use in PSHE/PSE/PSD and Citizenship lessons. There are also cross-curricular links to others subjects such as Literacy, Drama, English, Art and Science. You can find more information about how the lessons fit in with curriculum requirements using the curriculum grids in the accompanying teacher's notes booklets.

## What's in the pack?

As well as this booklet the *Cancertalk teaching pack* includes resource sheets, teacher's notes, a DVD and poster.

### Advice booklet

This booklet explains how to use the *Cancertalk pack*. It also includes:

- an introduction to Macmillan
- background information about cancer and a glossary
- information on fundraising for Macmillan
- details of Macmillan's websites
- useful contacts and publications.

### Resource sheets for pupils and teacher's notes

Each activity sheet has corresponding teacher's notes to describe how the sheet can be used as part of a lesson on cancer. All sheets can be easily photocopied.

### DVD

The *Cancertalk DVD* features teacher's and classroom modules for primary and secondary schools. You can use the DVD as an introduction to the printed materials, or as a stand-alone resource in class or assembly. There is more information on how to use the DVD on pages 7-11.

### Poster

The Cancertalk poster promotes the *Why Bother?* website where young people can go to find out about cancer and Macmillan's work. (To find out more about Macmillan's websites, see page 4). Display the poster in the classroom or on a school noticeboard.

# We are online

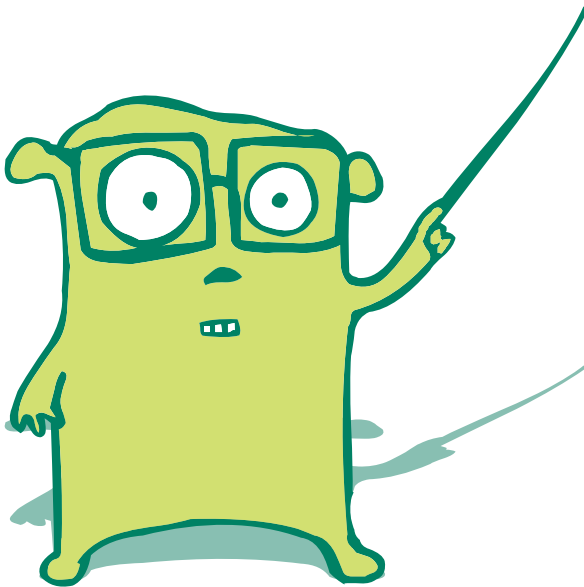
**Macmillan's schools and youth websites offer online support for teachers, youth group leaders, health professionals and young people.**

## **Cancertalk website**

[www.macmillan.org.uk/cancertalk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancertalk)

The *Cancertalk* website for teachers includes:

- information to help you discuss cancer with your pupils
- advice on how to support a pupil with cancer
- personal stories from young people, parents and teachers affected by cancer
- electronic versions of the *Cancertalk teaching pack*
- additional activity sheets for Key Stages 1–4/P1–S4 for you to download
- press articles, and features from our *Cancertalk newsletter*, covering different cancer-related issues relevant to the schools and youth community
- a fundraising zone with details of Macmillan's fun packed national events programme, as well as ideas, tips and tools to plan and run your own fundraising event.



## **Why Bother?**

[www.macmillan.org.uk/whybother](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/whybother)

*Why Bother?* is an interactive site for children and young people. We worked together with young people to develop this website to make sure it accurately addresses their needs and concerns. It gives them the opportunity to investigate the subject independently. It provides:

- cancer information and answers to frequently asked questions
- animations, cartoon characters and quizzes
- audio clips of true stories from young people
- ideas on how children and young people can support Macmillan and help people living with cancer
- a message board where young people can share experiences and discuss issues with their peers.

You can include the *Why Bother?* website in an ICT-based lesson, asking your pupils to find the answers to questions about cancer and Macmillan Cancer Support. Or you could just give them the website address so they can visit it in their own time.

**'This website is a great place for young people to go to find out more information on cancer. It is important for young people to understand about cancer because they could have someone in their family or a schoolmate who is affected or even have cancer themselves, like me.'**

(Sarah, 14)

## **More information**

To find out more about Macmillan, what we do and how you can get involved, visit our main website at [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

If you're planning your own fundraising event, visit our brand centre at [www.be.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.be.macmillan.org.uk) where you can customise and print your own unique posters, leaflets and tickets.

# Using the DVD

Using the Cancertalk DVD in a lesson is a great way to get your pupils talking about cancer. It contains separate sections for primary and secondary schools, and teacher's modules to show you how to use the DVD in the classroom. You can use the DVD on its own or with the corresponding resource sheets in the *Cancertalk teaching pack*.

The printed teacher's notes and the teacher's module on the DVD are designed to give you:

- ideas and information so you can confidently teach your pupils about cancer
- suggestions on how to plan a lesson based on the DVD
- advice on how the issues raised in the DVD modules can be developed
- support with managing sensitive questions or situations.

**Note: The teacher's module is not meant to be shown to pupils. We recommend that you use only one case study per lesson.**

## Jenny's diary

The Jenny's diary module for primary schools is a four-part drama showing how a family copes when the dad has cancer. Jenny is a lively, bright 11-year-old girl. Over the course of the drama, her mum and dad help her understand what is happening to her dad, and the effect his illness is having on their family. It is clear that her mum and dad don't know all the answers, but they realise that Jenny is old enough to know more than they first thought. In the last scene, Jenny meets some school friends and together they resolve to do something positive to help people with cancer.

**Introduction and teacher's module** 14min 41sec

### Scene 1:

Going for a picnic 4min 13sec

### Scene 2:

Starting to understand 4min 24sec

### Scene 3:

Talking with dad 5min 38sec

### Scene 4:

Helping each other 3min 39sec

## Living with cancer

The Living with Cancer module for secondary schools consists of four personal stories from young people who have been affected by cancer. The young people featured are describing their own real-life experiences – they're not actors. They want to help young people understand what it is like to experience cancer. They explain how they have dealt with it and show how everyone, whether directly affected or not, can offer help and support.

**Introduction and teacher's module** 11min 4sec

### Case study 1:

The world is your oyster 5min 18sec

### Case study 2:

People say I'm famous at school 6min

### Case study 3:

Life is so different without you 7min 6sec

### Case study 4:

Helping people with cancer 5min 34sec

# Using the DVD

## Jenny's diary

### Scene 1: Going for a picnic

#### Corresponding resource sheets/teacher's notes

*What is cancer?, More about cancer.*

#### Whole class introduction

Ask the class to brainstorm what they know about cancer.

Ask them to talk with a partner about their experiences of people they know who have been seriously ill or had cancer.

Ask if anyone is willing to share this with the class.

#### Introducing the scene

Tell your pupils that in this scene they will meet Jenny, a lively 11-year-old girl, her mum and her dad (who has cancer).

Explain that Jenny is frustrated because her dad is too tired to play football with her. She doesn't understand what he is going through.

Ask your pupils to think about the following questions while they watch the scene:

- how is Jenny feeling?
- what does her mum say about her dad's cancer?

Play the scene

#### Class activities

Ask the class to talk about the scene with a partner, and to think about:

- the different characters
- what Jenny was feeling
- what Jenny's mum told her
- whether Jenny's parents should have told her about her dad's cancer sooner than they did.

### Scene 2: Starting to understand

#### Corresponding resource sheets/teacher's notes

*How does cancer affect me?*

#### Whole class introduction

Ask the class about the different ways we show our feelings. Can we show our feelings without saying anything?

Ask the class to act out some expressions (eg bored, happy) for pupils to guess.

Ask two pupils to leave the room. The remaining pupils should choose an emotion that they will all act out when they return. See if the returning children can guess what emotion the others are portraying.

#### Introducing the scene

Tell pupils that in this scene they will find out what happens to people when they get cancer.

Explain that Jenny wants to understand how you get cancer. Her dad wants to talk about it as he knows this will help her.

Ask your pupils to think about the following questions while they watch the scene:

- how does Jenny's dad explain how he got cancer?
- what has he done to help his recovery?

Play the scene

#### Class activities

Ask pupils to talk about the scene with a partner.

Ask them to discuss the way Jenny's dad explained how he got cancer. Was it a good explanation?

Did they find it easy to understand?

Ask the class to come up with four things that people can do to live healthily and reduce the risk of getting cancer. They can use pictures to show these, or write them down and alongside each one draw a symbol or sign to represent it.



# Using the DVD

## Scene 3: Talking with dad

### Corresponding resource sheets/teacher's notes

*Anna's story.*

#### Whole class introduction

Ask your class:

- have any of you been ill and had to see a doctor?
- how did you feel when you saw the doctor?
- what treatment did the doctor give you and what did you think of this?
- did the treatment make you tired or sore? Or did the medicine have a bad taste?

#### Introducing the scene

Explain that in this scene Jenny is out walking with her dad. She asks him how he feels and finds out how he has felt over the course of his treatment. She is beginning to understand more, which will mean she is better able to support her dad.

Ask your pupils to think about the following questions while they watch the scene:

- what treatment has Jenny's dad received?
- how does the cancer make him feel?

Play the scene

#### Class activities

Ask your class to:

- discuss the treatment Jenny's dad received
- make a list of Jenny's dad's feelings and things Jenny can do to support him
- think about who else gives Jenny's dad support.

Explain the idea of a support network and that everyone has one. Demonstrate the idea by describing your own support network.

Use the support network activity described in the *Anna's story teacher's notes* that asks pupils to draw their own support network.

## Scene 4: Helping each other

### Corresponding resource sheets/teacher's notes

*Get active, stay healthy.*

#### Whole class introduction

Ask the class to discuss what they have done in past to support someone who is ill.

Explain that it can be as simple as bringing their mum a cup of tea or visiting a friend.

Explain how fundraising can be another effective form of support.

Emphasise that any type of support is worthwhile.

Explain the differences between practical support and emotional support, for example being understanding, being there, and showing empathy.

#### Introducing the scene

Explain that in this scene Jenny is having a chat with her friends Danny and Adele. Danny tells her about a girl in his class who had leukaemia and how they supported her.

Tell your pupils to think about the following questions while they watch the scene:

- how did some of Danny's classmates treat the girl with leukaemia?
- how can you best support people who are ill?
- why do many people want to help by fundraising?
- what were some of the ideas the children described for raising money?

Play the scene

#### Class activities

Ask the class to brainstorm some ideas for raising money.

Tell them to think about what makes a good poster, eg slogans, pictures, colours.

Ask them to design a poster to promote their ideas. These can be sent to the Schools and Youth team at Macmillan Cancer Support to display and share with other children (address details on back cover).

# Using the DVD

## Living with cancer

### Case study 1: The world is your oyster

#### Corresponding resource sheets/teacher's notes

*What is cancer? (KS3/KS4), Reducing the risks (KS3/KS4).*

#### Whole class introduction

Explain that, while anyone can get cancer, it is more common in older people. However, sometimes young people do get cancer.

Emphasise that while some people die from the illness, many people get better after treatment.

#### Introducing the scene

This is Liz Cross's story. At 16 she found she had cancer in her kidneys. Liz explains how she became ill and was diagnosed with cancer. She talks about her treatment and how the illness affected her.

Ask your pupils to think about the following questions while they watch the scene:

- how did Liz find out she had cancer?
- how did she react to the news?
- what did her treatment involve?
- how do you think it has changed her outlook on life?

Play the scene

#### Class activities

Ask your pupils to talk about Liz's story with a partner.

Tell them to consider how becoming ill with cancer affects a young person's life, and how might it affect them?

Discuss with the whole class what Liz's treatment involved and what the side effects were.

### Case study 2: People say I'm famous at school

#### Corresponding resource sheets/teacher's notes

*My brother's got cancer (KS3).*

#### Whole class introduction

Explain to the class that there are two types of cancer: solid cancers, often called tumours, which appear as a lump in the body; and cancers like leukaemia that do not form a lump but affect the blood.

For more information on describing solid cancers or leukaemia, see Further information about cancer on pages 18-21.

Explain how cancer can have a big effect on friends and family members as well as the person with the illness.

#### Introducing the scene

Tell the class they will hear from Tom Morrissey and his family and friends. Tom was just like any normal teenager until he was diagnosed with leukaemia.

Ask your pupils to think about the following questions while they watch the scene:

- how did Tom's family deal with his illness?
- how did Tom react to his treatment?
- how did people at school react to Tom?

Play the scene

#### Class activities

Discuss Tom's case study with the whole class.

Draw two columns on a piece of paper. Label one 'positive reactions' and the other 'negative reactions' and ask your pupils to list the attitudes and behaviours of Tom's schoolmates under those two headings based on what they have seen.

Ask your pupils to consider how would they would want to be treated by their friends and family if they had cancer or a serious illness?

Working with a partner, ask your pupils to write a 'declaration of intent' which states how you would want to treat a classmate who had been diagnosed with leukaemia.

# Using the DVD

## Case study 3: Life is so different without you

### Corresponding resource sheets/teacher's notes

*The wardrobe (KS4).*

#### Whole class introduction

Tell the class that the lesson will focus on bereavement.

Explain to your class that bereavement is the loss of a person through death, and grieving is the reaction to the process.

Introduce the subject by talking about how we all experience major life changes, such as moving from primary to secondary school, or moving house.

Ask them how they felt as a result of any major life changes they have experienced.

With your class discuss the issue of bereavement and the concept of grieving. This could include how other cultures grieve, or a public display of emotion such as the 'Princess Diana phenomenon'.

#### Introducing the scene

Explain that this section of the DVD looks at how four young people cope with losing a parent. The four stories are inspirational and can help us appreciate those that we care for.

Ask your pupils to think about the following questions while they watch the scene:

- how did each of the people in the case study deal with their loss?
- what help and support did they receive?

Play the scene

#### Class activities

With a partner, ask pupils to identify some of the ways each young person in the film dealt with their bereavement.

Ask your pupils how they think writing letters, drawing, playing music and talking about their loss have helped.

Ask your pupils to discuss the following questions with the rest of the class:

- can spending time on your own help when grieving?
- how can you support a friend who is grieving?
- what can you learn from these young people's experiences?

## Case study 4: Helping people with cancer

### Corresponding resource sheets/teacher's notes

*Caring for people with cancer (KS3), What can you do? (KS4).*

#### Whole class introduction

Explain to the class that there are lots of ways that we can support people who are ill.

Describe the differences between practical and emotional support.

While you're discussing support you may also want to ask your pupils about any fundraising activities they have done in the past and why they did them.

Ask your pupils if this activity helped to raise awareness of a particular issue in the school or the local community.

#### Introducing the scene

Tell pupils that in this part of the film they will hear from people who have been involved with supporting people affected by cancer, and what they have learned from their experience.

Ask your pupils to think about the following questions while they watch the scene:

- how could we support someone in our class who had cancer?
- how could the school help to support that person?
- what have people in the film done to show their support for someone with cancer?
- why do some people want to fundraise as a response?

Play the scene

#### Class activities

With a partner, ask your pupils to discuss how you could support a person in the class if they had cancer.

Remind the class that in the film Liz suggested it might have helped her if a teacher or nurse had come into her class and explained how she might want to be treated by those around her.

Ask pupils to devise a presentation about this that can be shown to the class.

Explain that many people like to be involved by raising money for cancer support organisations like Macmillan.

Ask the class to think about how people in the film raised money. Ask them to come up with their own ideas for fundraising activities.

# Cancertalk week

Taking part in Cancertalk Week, Macmillan's annual awareness-raising week in January for schools, is a great opportunity to do some straight talking about cancer and related issues in your school. Give your class or group the chance to ask questions, share experiences, and dispel myths and misconceptions.

You can use the *Cancertalk teaching pack* to plan a special assembly on cancer, or organise a series of lessons throughout the week using the activity sheets and teacher's notes. And why not organise your own fundraising event, or join one of our national events such as The Big Hush (see next page).

Register your school for Cancertalk Week today and we will send you an event pack full of great ideas about how to get your school involved. It also includes DIY press releases to help you attract the local media and stickers to give out to your pupils.

Just fill in and return the enclosed registration form, call **0845 601 1716** or email **[schools@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:schools@macmillan.org.uk)** quoting reference **SCHL**.

## How to get involved in Cancertalk Week

Pupils, teachers, parents...everyone can get involved in Cancertalk Week. Here are some ideas about what your school could do.

- Plan a special assembly at the beginning of the week to introduce the topic (see page 17 for a sample assembly template).
- Invite a guest speaker to share their personal experiences of cancer, or someone from Macmillan. (see back page for contact details).
- Dedicate circle time or the first 10 minutes of the morning or afternoon session to Cancertalk, using the ideas in the teacher's pack.
- During literacy lessons discuss stories about people living with cancer. You could take a newspaper report about a famous person or a well-known local character who is living with cancer as your starting point. Alternatively, read *The Secret C* (see page 23 for further details)
- Focus your PSHE/PSE/PSD and Citizenship lessons on talking about and understanding cancer during the week – or ideally longer.
- Include lessons on charity and the ways the pupils can help support people with serious illnesses.
- Discuss fundraising and the different ways pupils can get involved in supporting a charity like Macmillan. You can also discuss Macmillan's work to help pupils improve their understanding of cancer and its treatment. See the next page for more ideas and information about fundraising.
- If you have a school council, this is an excellent project for it to manage. Council members could plan all the Cancertalk Week events and displays, and invite visitors.
- If the school has its own broadcasting station, use it to get Cancertalk Week messages across. You could even create special jingles.
- Use your school newsletter to advertise Cancertalk Week events and messages.
- Ask governors or the school board to get involved. Pupils or teachers could attend one of the governors' or school board meetings to tell them about Cancertalk Week and ask for their support.
- Involve parents, carers and guardians as much as possible so the discussion can continue at home and they can reinforce the messages learned in school. A sample letter for parents/guardians is provided on page 15.
- Contact the local media using our DIY press releases to help raise awareness of the event in your area.
- Send details and photos of your Cancertalk Week activities to Macmillan. We can include them in our *Cancertalk newsletter* or on the *Cancertalk website* (see back page for contact details).

# Fundraising for Macmillan Cancer Support

Many teachers and pupils have told us that after using the Cancertalk resources, they want to raise money to help Macmillan improve the lives of people affected by cancer. Fundraising for Macmillan is easy. You can join in one of our organised events around the country, or you can encourage your pupils to come up with their own fundraising ideas.

## The Big Hush

Why not take part in the easiest schools fundraising event ever? Enjoy a bit of peace and quiet by challenging your pupils to stay as quiet as mice for 20 minutes (or perhaps longer!) and join in The Big Hush, Macmillan's annual sponsored silence.

The Big Hush takes place every January and coincides with the end of Cancertalk Week (see previous page). It's a great opportunity for your class or group to reflect on what they've learnt over the week. And by raising money for Macmillan, each pupil will be helping improve the lives of people affected by cancer.

**'The children loved taking part in The Big Hush. They really wanted to help after learning about cancer at school, and this was such a simple way to raise money!'**

(Ms Williams, teacher)

To find out more about The Big Hush, visit [www.macmillan.org.uk/bighush](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/bighush) or call us on **0845 601 1716**.

## The World's Biggest Coffee Morning

Every September you can join thousands of people across the UK as they take part in Macmillan's record-breaking World's Biggest Coffee Morning.

Holding a World's Biggest Coffee Morning event is easy to do and such a fun way to motivate pupils (and teachers!) to work together. You could challenge a class to organise the coffee morning for the rest of the school as part of PSE/PSHE/PSD or Citizenship lessons, hold a coffee morning in assembly or during a lesson in the classroom, or even open up your school's event to parents, guardians and friends.

And it's not just about serving coffee. Why not ask pupils to mix up some healthy fruit juices or smoothies as an alternative? They could even bring in homemade cakes and biscuits to go with your drinks.

You can hold your coffee morning whenever and wherever you like, and Macmillan will supply you with posters, balloons and collection boxes to help make your event a big success!

To find out more about the World's Biggest Coffee Morning, visit [www.macmillan.org.uk/coffee](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/coffee) or call **0845 602 1246**.

## Other events

We've got even more great events for schools that want to get involved in fundraising for Macmillan, including our Junior Longest Day Challenge in June for any keen young golfers, and Walk Wonders, our annual sponsored walking event in May. To find out about these and other events, as well as what's going on in your local area, visit [www.macmillan.org.uk/raisemoney](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/raisemoney)

# Fundraising for Macmillan Cancer Support

## Organising your own event

If you want to organise your own event, here are some ideas to get you started.

- Non-uniform days are always popular with pupils and are a simple way to raise money. You could do a different version of this where pupils pay teachers to come in school uniform, or attach a theme to the day such as Christmas outfits or heroes and heroines.
- Sponsored sports day – ask pupils to get sponsored to take part in old favourites such as the egg and spoon race and three-legged race. Donate a small prize to the winning team or pupil.
- Organise other sponsored activities or ticketed events that students will really enjoy, such as danceathons, Blind Date or Pop Idol style events.
- Donate the proceeds from school events such as concerts, school plays or summer fêtes to Macmillan.
- Sell cakes and refreshments at parents' evenings and donate the proceeds.
- Ask pupils to make a donation to throw a wet sponge at brave teachers!
- Sponsored events such as runs, swims and walks tie in well with the current focus on healthy lifestyles.

**'We held a raffle at the Christmas Fair this year and gave the proceeds to Macmillan. We raised over £100 – it was so easy!'**

(Mr Aldridge, teacher)

We've got all the tools, tips and sponsorship forms you need at [www.macmillan.org.uk/cancertalk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancertalk) – just click on the collecting tin on the homepage.

99% of Macmillan's income comes from the generosity of supporters like you.

# Parents, carers and guardians – get them involved!

Using the *Cancertalk teaching pack* and taking part in Cancertalk Week will have much greater impact when you involve parents, carers and guardians. Including them will help show how important it is to talk about cancer – at home as well as at school – and encourage them to reinforce the messages their children are hearing in the classroom.

Ask parents, carers, guardians, grandparents or other members of the community (perhaps a local Macmillan cancer specialist or fundraiser) to join in your school's activities wherever possible. This could mean visiting the school for an assembly or awareness-raising event, or just asking them to focus on cancer issues at home or in the community. Some may be involved in charity work or supporting friends or family members living with the illness – or indeed they may have experienced cancer themselves and want to tell others about their experience. People are often very positive about sharing their experiences with children and young people.

You could send this letter home to explain the aims of Cancertalk Week. If you are holding a special event, such as a sponsored silence or a fundraising event, you should also include those details.

You can download this letter from [www.macmillan.org.uk/cancertalk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancertalk)

School name  
School address  
Postcode  
Date

Dear parent/carers/guardian

Between 22 and 26 January 2007, **<Name of school>** will be taking part in Cancertalk Week, part of an education programme developed by the charity Macmillan Cancer Support. The programme aims to increase awareness of cancer and its effects, and to encourage people to talk openly and honestly about the illness.

More than one in three people in the UK will receive a cancer diagnosis at some point in their lives. This means most people in our school will be affected by cancer in some way. The Cancertalk programme deals with the issues in an appropriate and reassuring way. We feel that it is important for our pupils to understand the facts about cancer and we want them to be able to talk about it in a sensitive and informed way. We are also keen to reduce any fears or misunderstandings they may have.

During Cancertalk Week we will be using materials specially developed by Macmillan Cancer Support. These materials are designed specifically for young people and reinforce our work in other areas of the curriculum.

**<If you are taking part in The Big Hush, Macmillan's sponsored silence event, or any other fundraising activity to raise money to help people living with cancer, add details here>.**

We are really keen for parents, carers and guardians to get involved in our Cancertalk Week activities, so please talk to your child's teacher if you would like more information.

We hope you agree that our pupils and community will benefit from the school being involved in Cancertalk Week. If you have any comments about the week's activities and how your child feels about them, please do get in touch.

Yours faithfully

# Talking to your pupils about cancer

Cancertalk encourages schools to have open, sensitive and informed discussions with children and young people about cancer. They may not have been directly affected by cancer, but they will all have heard of it and probably have their own ideas and beliefs about it. These thoughts are quite often misguided or misinformed, and are usually grounded in society's fear of cancer. Cancertalk should help dispel some of the myths and the pupils' fears. If you are going to be working with a group that you don't know well, check with a member of staff who knows the pupils if any of them or members of their family have been affected by cancer or another serious illness. If there are, you will want to bear this in mind when planning your lesson.

For younger pupils, circle time is an ideal opportunity to introduce discussions about cancer, or for older pupils you could use an assembly or tutor group. Here are some questions you might want to raise:

- how could we help and support someone we know who is seriously ill?
- how could we support a class member returning to school after a stay in hospital or a long absence due to cancer treatment?
- how might that person be feeling about facing everyone again?
- what might that person have missed?
- what could we do to make them feel comfortable and welcome again?

Research shows that when talking about cancer, it is important that you can:

- answer young people's questions honestly and truthfully
- talk through young people's fears and worries without being prescriptive or judgemental
- reassure them that people are not to blame if they get cancer
- take them through the subject from a simplified scientific or medical perspective
- acknowledge young people's feelings and provide a safe environment for them to express themselves
- explain the risks and offer reassurance.

## Answering their questions

Answer your pupils' questions as truthfully as you can. Don't be afraid to say that you don't know the answer but that you can find out together. Active listening is essential.

To help you to feel more confident see page 22 for answers to questions pupils often ask. Make sure there is someone with whom the children can talk through their fears and worries – you, the school nurse or another trusted adult.

Your pupils may react in a number of different ways when talking about cancer, particularly if they have recently found out that a parent/carer/guardian is sick or may die. It is important to reassure them that:

- it is ok to feel scared. Adults feel this way too. A good way to cope with worries and anxieties is to talk about them with someone you trust
- it is ok to feel angry and there are lots of ways to express anger safely without hurting yourself or anyone else
- sadness is also part of the natural grieving process when someone you love is seriously ill or dies. Finding someone you trust to talk to or just be there when you are feeling sad will help.

Some key ideas to get across to your pupils:

- it is nothing you have done or said that caused cancer
- you cannot catch cancer from anyone else
- nobody knows why some people develop cancer and others don't
- some lifestyle choices reduce the risk of getting cancer, and others increase it
- cancer is not a death sentence
- there are many ways young people can give support to people with cancer
- Macmillan Cancer Support helps people who are living with cancer.

**'I couldn't have got through without the support of my school.'**

(Lizzi, aged 16)

If your pupils have any more questions or need someone to talk to they can call the Macmillan YouthLine free on 0808 808 0800, Monday to Friday 9am-10pm.



# Assembly template

Use this template to help you plan an assembly explaining why the school is taking part in Cancertalk Week, and inspiring them to get involved. You can hold the assembly at the beginning of Cancertalk Week, as an introduction to the Cancertalk material. Alternatively, schedule it a few weeks before Cancertalk Week to get your pupils or school council excited about it and thinking of imaginative events that they could organise. Before planning your assembly, please read *Talking about cancer with your pupils* (page 16).

**'An assembly can be a great starting point for learning about the charity and talking about cancer with pupils.'**  
(Teacher)

## Cancer quiz

Tell your pupils that you are going to describe an illness. The pupils should work out what illness you are describing from these five statements.

- More than one in three people will develop this illness at some point in their lives.
- You can get it anywhere in your body.
- It is very rare among children and young people and is much more common among people over 65.
- Three commonly used treatments for the illness are radiotherapy, chemotherapy and surgery.
- Sometimes people find it very difficult to talk about it.

Instead of reading out these statements, you could use an overhead projector, or write the statements on cards and ask pupils to hold them up.

## What do the pupils know?

The pupils should quickly realise that the illness is cancer. Once you have been through all the statements, ask the pupils what else they know about cancer.

You might want to read out the quotes below from two young people who have had cancer. They can help make the topic sound less scary, and emphasise the positive role others can play in supporting someone with cancer.

## Cancertalk Week

Explain to the pupils that the school is going to take part in Cancertalk Week.

Cover the school's aims and objectives for Cancertalk Week. Explain the plan for the week and include the answers to the following questions:

- do you intend to run awareness-raising events?
- will there be an opportunity to fundraise?
- will you invite visitors into school during the week?  
Your local Macmillan office might be able to help (see back page for contact details).

Use the assembly to discuss your ideas with the school community.

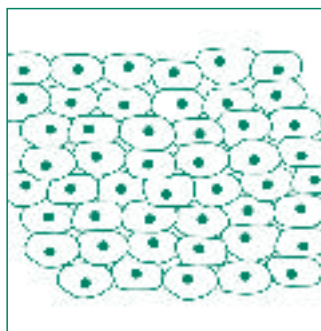
**'My friends, family, doctors and nurses were all there when I needed them and they helped me through it.'**  
(Louise, aged 16)

**'The ward was lovely and the doctors and nurses were great. There was a group of us that were in at the same time. It was great having people around you knowing in a way what you were going through.'**  
(Margaret, aged 14)

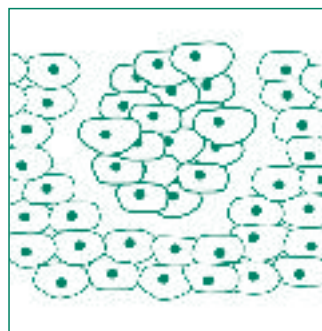
# Further information about cancer

Cancer is the name given to a group of illnesses that can occur in any organ of the body, and which all involve abnormal growth of cells. There are over 200 different types of cancer, and everybody's experience of the illness is unique and personal. All these different forms of cancer have similar features, but each has a distinctive character that depends on the particular type of cancer and where it is located in the body.

The organs and tissues of the body are made up of tiny building blocks called cells. Cancer is an illness of these cells. Although cells in different parts of the body may look and work differently, most repair and reproduce themselves in the same way. Normally division happens in a controlled way, but sometimes the process goes out of control, producing abnormal cells that keep on dividing.



Normal cells



Cancer cells forming a tumour

## There are two main types of cancer:

### 1 Solid cancers

These form when abnormal cells crowd out healthy cells, forming a lump, or tumour. This characterises many types of cancer.

### 2 Leukaemia and lymphomas

These occur when cells divide and multiply abnormally, but they do not form tumours. Signs of leukaemia might include bruising, aching joints or a pale skin colour, but sometimes leukaemia is only diagnosed after a routine blood test.

Not all tumours are cancerous – some are benign, or harmless, and may not need treatment. Cancers, which are made from malignant cells, however, can spread to other parts of the body, and destroy surrounding tissue. Malignant tumours may also be dangerous because cells can break away and travel to other parts of the body, where they can form new groups of abnormal cells, called secondary growths.

## Cancer statistics

### More than one in three people will receive a cancer diagnosis at some point in their lives.

The risk of getting cancer increases as you get older – over 65% of all new cancers are diagnosed in people over the age of 65.<sup>1</sup> Childhood cancer is rare, affecting one in 500 children before the age of 15.<sup>1</sup> In the UK, which has a total child population of approximately 11 million, around 1,700 children receive a diagnosis of cancer each year and the majority of these children will be successfully treated – seven in 10 children survive for at least 10 years after their cancer diagnosis.<sup>2</sup> For certain cancers the outlook is even better.

It is important to remember that many people survive a cancer diagnosis. Even when there is no recovery, people can live with the illness for many years.

<sup>1</sup> CancerStats, Cancer Research UK, June 2006

<sup>2</sup> Cancerbackup, June 2006

# Further information about cancer

**In the UK today over one million people are living with the illness.<sup>2</sup>**

The range of cancers in children and young people is also very different to those in adults. It is rare for children to get solid cancers such as breast and lung cancer; they are more likely to get other cancers such as leukaemia, lymphomas and brain tumours. The chances of developing cancer vary hugely from person to person – everything from age, lifestyle, environment and genetics play a part.

## Diagnosis

There are lots of different tests that are used to find out if someone has cancer. These include blood tests, scans or even having a biopsy, a surgical procedure where tissue is taken from a lump and examined to see whether it is malignant or harmless.

## Treatments

Depending on the type of cancer and what stage it is at when diagnosed, treatments can be very successful. There are three commonly used treatments:

### 1 Surgery

Surgery involves removing a tumour by cutting it out. Sometimes, because of the size and position of the tumour, an operation may be too dangerous or cause too much damage. In these cases, radiotherapy or chemotherapy can be given to shrink the tumour to make surgery easier.

### 2 Radiotherapy

Radiotherapy involves exposing cancer cells to a type of radiation. The radiation is delivered little by little, in sessions lasting, at most, a few minutes. It usually involves exposing the area affected by cancer to radioactive waves in much the same way that ordinary X-ray images are taken of a broken limb. This can be effective in killing cancer cells and reducing the size of tumours. The course of treatment does vary, but it can be up to six weeks. Radiotherapy is painless, but there are side effects including damage to the healthy cells close to the area being treated, which causes the skin to feel sore, as if sunburnt, or when radiotherapy is given to the stomach this can cause diarrhoea and nausea.

### 3 Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy treats the cancer with powerful drugs which are often administered intravenously (directly into a vein), but can also be taken orally in either pill or liquid form. The drugs work by preventing the cancer cells from dividing properly. This damages the cells and in due course they die. This treatment is usually given regularly (every three or four weeks) over a period of months. Chemotherapy drugs are designed to damage any cells (including cancer cells) that are rapidly dividing. Unfortunately, chemotherapy can destroy good fast-growing cells such as hair cells and that is why patients end up losing their hair during treatment – though it will grow back later on. People receiving ‘chemo’ often feel sick and tired. They can also be prone to throat and chest infections.

If taken intravenously, the drugs can be delivered through a drip into a vein in the arm. Sometimes, in order to avoid causing too much strain on veins, the drugs can be put into the body using what is called a reservoir, which is a device that can be put under a patient’s skin. A special needle called a Huber needle can then be used to put drugs and fluids through the skin and into the patient’s body from the reservoir. This method means nothing remains ‘hanging out of the patient’ and they are free to dress as they like.

Alternatively, doctors sometimes require patients to use a central line (such as a Hickman line or PICC line). This is a fine plastic tube that is inserted in to the chest and remains on view coming out of the patient’s body. If the child is having chemotherapy, the drugs could be delivered through this central line. This can allow large amounts of fluid or blood transfusions into the patient’s system – more than is possible using a reservoir. Children’s cancers are treated usually with a combination of chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

# Further information about cancer

## Complementary therapies

Complementary therapies such as reflexology, acupuncture and Chinese medicine may also be used to support cancer patients through and beyond their treatment. These are generally viewed as treatments that are given alongside the conventional cancer treatments. Some people have found that complementary therapies and even special diets help reduce the side effects of cancer treatment. They can also help to reduce the stress and anxiety that are often part of living with cancer.

Some cancers do not respond to treatment, perhaps because the cancer has been discovered at a very advanced stage. In these cases, health care staff work with patients to ensure the patient maintains a good quality of life.

## Living with cancer

Everyone's experience of living with cancer is different. Below is an outline of the steps some people may go through in diagnosing and treating their cancers.

- 1 Visit to GP
- 2 Tests – These may include: biopsy on a piece of body tissue, blood tests, X-rays, scans
- 3 Diagnosis – Initial treatment begins at this stage. The person with cancer will also need emotional support as they come to terms with the diagnosis.
- 4 Treatment
- 5 Further treatment – Sometimes the original cancer (primary cancer) will return, or a new area of growth may be found (secondary cancer). The doctor may recommend another course of treatment.
- 6 Supportive and palliative care – This puts the emphasis on the person with cancer's quality of life, and how they and their family can manage the illness.
- 7 Long-term monitoring and support

## How to reduce your risk

Although nobody knows for sure what actually causes cancer, there are certain things that can be done to reduce the risk.

### Early detection of cancer significantly influences the outcome of treatment and a patient's survival prospects.

Teaching your pupils about the importance of a healthier diet, regular exercise and not filling the body with toxins such as smoke or large amounts of alcohol or caffeine is an essential first step in reducing the risk of developing cancer in later life. The basic health and fitness principles that the children need to know are these:

**1 Diet matters.** Eat a diet that is high in fibre, fresh fruit and vegetables (which boost the immune system), and low in fats, salt and sugar. Processed and convenience foods generally have a poorer nutritional value than fresh, non-processed food.

**2 Drink a lot.** To stay healthy the body needs plenty of fluids, especially water. Has the school thought about providing pupils with water bottles to sip from during the day?

**3 Exercise regularly** – at least two hours a week but preferably for 20 to 30 minutes every day. Pupils need to understand that exercise isn't just about playing sports or going to the gym. Walking, cycling, skipping or swimming, for example, are all excellent forms of exercise. Encourage your pupils to engage in physical activities that make them 'puff and pant' for at least 5-10 minutes every day. For example, providing skipping ropes at playtimes is cheap, and a fun way to get the children exercising. The aim is to increase the heart rate for short bursts so that good circulation and oxygen levels are maintained and the heart, which is the largest muscle in the body, is exercised to keep it in peak condition.

# Further information about cancer

**4 Avoid smoking!** Every year around 120,000 smokers in the UK die as a result of smoking. Smoking causes a third of all cancer deaths and lung cancer alone kills one person every 15 minutes in the UK. In 2004, there were 152,857 deaths from cancer in the UK.<sup>1</sup> Make sure the children understand that smoking dramatically increases the chances of getting many different forms of cancer – not just lung cancer.

Talk honestly with your pupils about how they feel about smoking. Do they think it is 'cool' to smoke? Have they ever been tempted to try it? What does it feel like to be in a very smoky atmosphere? What would they do if someone else tried to pressurise them into smoking?

**5 Avoid being in the sun when it is at its hottest.** This is usually between 11am and 3pm. When in the sun, wear sunscreen that's factor 15 or above, cover up so you don't burn. Sunburn is painful and increases your future risk of a malignant melanoma. Melanoma is the third most common cancer among people aged 15 to 39 and early detection is crucial for successful treatment – there are over 1,800 deaths from malignant melanoma each year in UK (more deaths than in Australia, despite Australia having more cases diagnosed.)<sup>1</sup>

**6 Being conscious of changes in the body.** The idea is not to make pupils anxious about their bodies or the changes that naturally occur as they grow, but to make them aware that if there is a problem it is much more likely to be successfully treated if it is spotted and dealt with early. Make sure your pupils have someone to talk to if they are worried. Encourage your pupils to share any concerns or worries with a trusted friend or adult.

<sup>1</sup> CancerStats Cancer Research UK, June 2006.

# Frequently asked questions

## Questions from children and young people

Overall, the more informed your answers are the better, although do not be afraid to say, 'I don't know,' when you do not have a response to hand. You can always come back with a reply later on – or encourage them to find the answer themselves.

### How likely am I to get cancer?

More than one in three people will develop cancer at some point in their life. It's important to remember that many people survive a cancer diagnosis and people can live with the illness for many years – in the UK today, over a million people are living with the illness. Most people who develop cancer are aged 65 or over. Young people are very unlikely to get cancer. However, if they do, survival rates are as high as seven in 10. Currently in the UK there is a risk of one in 600 that a child will develop cancer before the age of 15. Every year around 1,700 new cases of cancer in children are diagnosed. Among all groups, people whose cancer is diagnosed early have much better survival rates. However, lifestyle choices such as diet, exercise and whether you smoke or not can also make a difference.

### Can I catch cancer from someone else?

No. Cancer is not contagious, meaning you cannot catch it from somebody else.

### What has the person with cancer done wrong – is it their fault?

No, it is not their fault. Precisely why people get cancer is still unclear and involves both genetics and lifestyle, but he or she is not to blame. We still don't know why some people get cancer and others don't, but both genetics and lifestyle factors are involved. Try to turn the discussion towards looking at the kinds of positive health and lifestyle choices pupils may be able to make. Point out that many forms of cancer that occur, particularly in young people, such as leukaemia, are not linked to lifestyle choices. There are organisations dedicated to researching why cancer happens.

### Do you always die from cancer?

No. Treatments are much more successful now, and many people fully recover. Early diagnosis and treatment greatly increase survival rates.

### Does your hair always fall out?

No. This depends on the treatment. Chemotherapy and radiotherapy are both used to destroy cancer cells. These cancer cells divide very quickly, just like our hair cells. So when you receive chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy, it not only destroys cancer cells but your hair cells as well. But it nearly always grows back, and often thicker and better than before treatment started.

## Questions from adults

Sometimes parents, carers, guardians or other teachers may not immediately see the relevance of the subject to children and young people. Here are some of the questions they may ask;

### Why cover such a depressing topic?

In the past, misplaced embarrassment about cancer has allowed misunderstandings and fears about the illness to grow. Cancer issues now have a high profile on health and government agendas, and with one in three people likely to develop some form of cancer in their lifetime, it is important to talk about it.

Education is a preparation for life and getting an illness is part of the human condition. Talking about cancer and other serious illnesses helps us to tackle present fears and think about how we and others might cope when faced with such problems.

Young people say that they want to know more so that they can do more to avoid getting cancer and support people who do. 1,114 young people aged 11-25 were asked to rank 10 health and social issues starting with the one they were most concerned about. They rated cancer second, with 49% saying they were very concerned about it and 37% quite concerned (Youth Awareness Monitor by nfp Synergy, October 2005).

### What if someone in the class is or has been ill with cancer or their family is affected by cancer?

It depends on the individual. Talking about the illness openly may well prove a relief for them and the class and they may seek to offer their experiences as valuable insights. If they choose to remain quiet, they may still find the discussion reassuring and comforting. Reinforce the need to keep channels of communication open between someone missing time at school because of treatment and their school friends. It is important to maintain a sense of normality.

# Useful publications

## Publications for adults

Macmillan Cancer Support  
*The Cancer Guide*  
Macmillan CancerLine  
www.macmillan.org.uk/publications  
Tel 0808 808 2020

A comprehensive information booklet aimed at people with cancer and those affected by it.

Macmillan Cancer Support  
*Talking to children when an adult has cancer*

Macmillan CancerLine  
www.macmillan.org.uk/publications  
Tel 0808 808 2020  
A practical booklet covering questions children and young people might ask and potential reactions and difficulties.

Cancerbackup  
*Talking to children about cancer*

www.cancerbackup.org.uk/publications  
This booklet outlines the steps a cancer patient can take to help their children understand what is happening to them. Available to read online, or to order.

Dr Robert Buckman  
*What You Really Need to Know About Cancer*  
(Pan Books)

A book which sets out the basic facts about cancer itself, treatment and living with the illness. A resource for the lay reader and professional.

John Diamond  
*C: Because Cowards Get Cancer Too* (Vermilion)

A blow-by-blow account of the progress of John Diamond's cancer and its treatment. Touching, funny and informative.

Beverly van der Molen  
*Taking Control of Cancer* (Class Publishing)

Offers practical and useful advice to people who have been diagnosed with cancer.

Jennifer Barraclough  
*Cancer and Emotion* (John Wiley and Sons)

Provides healthcare professionals with a comprehensive knowledge of the psychological problems found in patients' reactions to cancer.

Val Speechley and Maxine Rosenfield  
*Cancer at Your Fingertips* (Class Publishing)

A book containing positive and practical answers to questions from those with cancer, or those caring for someone with cancer.

Winston's Wish  
*As Big as It Gets: Supporting a Child When Someone in the Family is Seriously Ill*

Tel (Family Line)  
0845 20 30 40 5  
This booklet provides a range of ideas and suggestions for parents or carers when someone in their family is seriously ill.

United Kingdom Children's Cancer Study Group  
*Contact: A helping hand for families of children and young people with cancer*  
www.ukccsg.org.uk  
Tel 0116 249 4460

A free quarterly magazine for the families of children and young people with cancer and those who may have lost a child.

## Publications for children

Julie A. Stokes  
*The Secret C* (Winston's Wish/Macmillan Cancer Support)

Tel 0845 20 30 40 5  
A book aimed at children (and adults) that explains how to cope when a member of the family has cancer.

CanTeen Ireland  
*What's Going On: A Guide for Teenagers with Cancer*

A booklet by teenagers that contains advice and support from teenagers' experiences of cancer.

Christine Clifford  
*Our Family Has Cancer, Too!* (University of Minnesota Press)

Helps children and parents explore cancer and all that it means to their family.

Ann Couldrick and Graham Jeffery  
*When Your Mum or Dad Has Cancer* (Sobell Publications, Oxford)

A booklet that answers the questions children may ask when a parent is seriously ill.

S. Varley  
*Badger's Parting Gifts* (Picture Lions Collins, 1992)

A book aimed at the under 7s. After wise old badger dies, the other animals miss him, but he lives on in all they have learned from him.

# Useful contacts

If you, or people at your school, are affected by cancer, you may want to contact some of these organisations. We have listed information lines and websites, where available. Many of the organisations have local and regional headquarters.

## Cancer Charities

### General

#### Macmillan Cancer Support

[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)  
Macmillan CancerLine  
Tel 0808 808 2020  
Macmillan YouthLine  
Tel 0808 808 0800  
We improve the lives of people affected by cancer by providing practical, medical, emotional and financial support and pushing for better cancer care.

#### Cancerbackup

[www.cancerbackup.org.uk](http://www.cancerbackup.org.uk)  
Tel 0808 800 1234  
A cancer information organisation providing advice and support.

#### Cancer Research UK

[www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org)  
Tel 020 7242 0200  
A research organisation which aims to find new treatments and cures for cancer and improve cancer diagnoses and treatments.

#### Marie Curie Cancer Care

[www.mariecurie.org.uk](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk)  
Tel 0800 716 146  
Offers care and support for people with cancer, particularly for the terminally ill.

## Cancer Charities

### Types of cancer

The following organisations specialise in particular cancers. Many of the organisations in the General section (above) also provide information about specific cancers.

#### The Anthony Nolan Trust

[www.anthonynolan.com](http://www.anthonynolan.com)  
Tel 020 7284 1234  
Recruits bone marrow donors for people with leukaemia.

#### Breast Cancer Care

[www.breastcancercare.org.uk](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk)  
Tel 0808 800 6000  
Provides free help, information and support to women with breast cancer.

#### The Brain and Spine Foundation

[www.brainandspine.org.uk](http://www.brainandspine.org.uk)  
Tel 0808 808 1000  
Provides information and support with neurological disorders, including brain tumours.

#### CLIC Sargent

[www.clicsargent.org.uk](http://www.clicsargent.org.uk)  
Tel 0845 301 0031  
Supports young people under 21 who have, or have had cancer.

#### Bowel Cancer UK

[www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk](http://www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk)  
Tel 08708 50 60 50  
Provides information, leaflets and people's experiences of bowel cancer.

## The Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation

[www.roycastle.org](http://www.roycastle.org)  
Tel 0800 358 7200  
Dedicated to defeating lung cancer through research, prevention and support.

## Lymphoma Association

[www.lymphoma.org.uk](http://www.lymphoma.org.uk)  
Tel 0808 808 5555  
Provides information and support for people with Hodgkin's Disease and non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and their families.

## The Orchid Cancer Appeal

[www.orchid-cancer.org.uk](http://www.orchid-cancer.org.uk)  
Tel 020 7601 7808  
Funds research and promotes awareness of prostate and testicular cancers.  
A video on testicular cancer is available.

## Ovacome

[www.ovacome.org.uk](http://www.ovacome.org.uk)  
Tel 020 7380 9589  
A support organisation for women with ovarian cancer, and their families and friends.

## The Prostate Cancer Charity

[www.prostate-cancer.org.uk](http://www.prostate-cancer.org.uk)  
Tel 0845 300 8383  
Provides support and information services for people affected by prostate cancer.

## Children's Charities

### Childline

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
Tel 0800 1111  
Free 24-hour helpline for children and young people in trouble or danger.

### Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity

[www.gosh.org](http://www.gosh.org)  
Tel 020 7916 5678  
Cares for seriously ill children.

### Teenage Cancer Trust

[www.teencancer.org](http://www.teencancer.org)  
Tel 020 7387 1000  
Supports teenagers living with cancer, helps to improve cancer services and builds specially adapted adolescent units in NHS hospitals.



# Useful contacts

## Cancer Charities Scotland

**Breast Cancer  
Care Scotland**  
www.breastcancercare  
.org.uk/Aboutus  
/Scotland  
Tel 0845 077 1892

**CLAN (Cancer Link  
Aberdeen and North)**  
www.clanhouse.org  
Tel 0800 783 7922  
Provides support and  
advice for people with  
cancer, their relatives  
and friends.

**Crossroads (Scotland)**  
www.crossroads-scotland  
.co.uk  
Tel 0141 226 3793  
Campaigns for the visible  
and financial recognition  
of home carers.

**Cruse Bereavement  
Care Scotland**  
www.crusescotland.org.uk  
Tel 01738 444 178  
Information, counselling and  
bereavement support unit.

**Tak Tent  
Cancer Support**  
www.taktent.org.uk  
Tel 0141 211 0122  
Offers information and  
support, counselling  
and complementary  
therapies to anyone  
affected by cancer.

## Cancer Charities Wales

**Tenovus Cancer  
Information Centre**  
Tel 0808 808 10 10  
Provides information  
and support via a  
helpline staffed by  
experienced, cancer-  
trained nurses, counsellors  
and social workers.

## Cancer Charities Northern Island

**Action Cancer**  
www.actioncancer.org  
Tel 028 9080 33 44  
Provides screening clinics  
for men and women.

**CanTeen Ireland**  
www.canteen.ie  
Tel 00 353 1 8722012  
A support group for young  
people who have or  
have had cancer,  
and their siblings and  
friends. They organise  
weekend retreats.

**Northern Ireland  
Cancer Fund  
for Children**  
www.nicfc.com  
Tel 028 9080 5599  
Provide practical  
support to children  
and young people with  
cancer. Services include  
one-to-one and group  
support for young people  
aged 14-21.

**Ulster Cancer  
Foundation**  
www.ulstercancer.org  
Helpline 0800 783 33 39  
Information, counselling  
and support unit.

## Counselling and Bereavement

**British Association for  
Counselling and  
Psychotherapy**  
www.bacp.co.uk  
Tel 0870 443 5252  
Promotes the  
understanding and  
awareness of counselling.

**Carers UK**  
www.carersuk.org  
Tel 0808 808 7777  
Provides information and  
advice to carers through a  
network of local branches.

**Crossroads**  
www.crossroads.org.uk  
Tel 0845 450 0350  
Campaigns for the visible  
and financial recognition  
of home carers.

**Cruse Bereavement  
Care**  
www.crusebereavementcare  
.org.uk  
Tel 0870 167 1677  
Provides support for young  
people and adults who  
have been bereaved.

**Riprap**  
www.riprap.org.uk  
Provides information  
and support for young  
people who have a  
parent with cancer.

**Samaritans**  
www.samaritans.org  
Tel 08457 90 90 90  
Provides confidential  
emotional support to any  
person who is suicidal  
or despairing.

**Winston's Wish**  
www.winstonswish.org.uk  
Tel (Family Line)  
0845 20 30 40 5  
Provides information and  
support for bereaved  
children and their families.

# Useful contacts

## Health Education Websites

For teachers and young people

### Cancertalk website

[www.macmillan.org.uk/cancertalk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancertalk)

Macmillan Cancer Support's website for teachers, with downloadable teaching resources, cancer information, support for schools and fundraising ideas.

### Why Bother?

[www.macmillan.org.uk/whybother](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/whybother)

Macmillan Cancer Support's website for children and young people with friendly cartoon characters, quizzes and interactive message board.

### Band-aids and Blackboards

[www.faculty.fairfield.edu/fleitas/contents.html](http://www.faculty.fairfield.edu/fleitas/contents.html)

A site about growing up with medical problems for adults, parents and young people.

### BBC Health

[www.bbc.co.uk/health/cancer](http://www.bbc.co.uk/health/cancer)

Offers a range of general information, aimed at adults.

### Giving Up Smoking

[www.givingupsmoking.co.uk](http://www.givingupsmoking.co.uk)

Includes a 'What's in a cigarette?' guide and helpful Q & A material concerning cancer and smoking.

## Newton's Apple

[www.tpt.org/newtons/9/cncrtrts.html](http://www.tpt.org/newtons/9/cncrtrts.html)

A schools' site with activities about cancer.

## Royal Marsden Hospital

[www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk](http://www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk)

The website for the UK's leading cancer centre. Features the adventures of Captain Chemo.

## Wired for health

[www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk](http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk)

The government's health website for teachers. There are links to the government's other schools sites, which contain material on sun safety, smoking and healthy eating.

## Local Authority help

Your local education authority should be able to help you with the tuition needs of children with a long-term illness. Depending on your local authority, the Education Welfare Officer may offer your school further information and support to deal with any issues arising if a child in your school, or a parent/carer/guardian has cancer.

# Glossary

## **Benign**

Non-cancerous. Refers to tumours that grow slowly in one place and which, once removed by surgery, tend not to recur.

## **Biopsy**

Examination of a sample of tissue that has been removed from an area of the body where cancer is suspected.

## **Bone marrow**

Spongy material found in the centre of bones, produces blood cells.

## **Cancer**

The name given to a group of illnesses that can occur in any organ of the body, and which all involve abnormal or uncontrolled growth of cells.

## **Carcinogen**

A substance that can cause or help to cause cancer.

## **Chemotherapy**

The treatment of a disease or illness with powerful drugs.

## **Complementary therapies**

A range of non-medical therapies, such as aromatherapy, homeopathy and yoga.

## **Diagnosis**

Identification of a disease or illness in a person's body.

## **Immune system**

The body's natural defence mechanism against disease and infection.

## **Leukaemia**

Cancer of the blood. There are several types.

## **Malignant**

Cancerous. Malignant tumours can spread and destroy surrounding tissue, and have the capacity to spread further.

## **Mammogram**

A specialised x-ray which shows up the breast tissue and can detect breast cancer at a very early stage.

## **Mastectomy**

The removal by surgery of all or part of the breast.

## **Melanoma**

The most serious type of skin cancer.

## **Primary cancer**

The first malignant tumour to develop in a particular part of the body.

## **Prosthesis**

A specially-made replacement for a part of the body which has been removed, such as a breast or limb.

## **Radiotherapy**

The treatment of cancer by x-rays or gamma rays to destroy cancer cells.

## **Scan**

A way to build an image of the internal organs.

## **Secondary growths**

New tumours that are formed because cancer cells from the original tumour have been carried to other parts of the body in the blood and lymphatic system.

## **Side effects**

Additional, usually unwanted, effects caused by treatment for an illness. Side effects from radiotherapy and chemotherapy include hair loss, a dry mouth, tiredness, and feeling or being sick.

## **Supportive care**

Specialist care to control the symptoms of an illness.

## **Tumour**

A lump or mass of cancer cells that can be either benign or malignant.

Schools and Youth team  
Macmillan Cancer Support  
89 Albert Embankment  
London SE1 7UQ  
Tel 020 7840 7805  
Fax 020 7840 7841  
[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

© Macmillan Cancer Support; August 2006  
Macmillan Cancer Support, registered charity number 261017  
Isle of Man charity number 604