

## Just Diagnosed with Cancer? **Your Kids Will Be Okay.**

So you have cancer. And young kids. Well...shoot. We understand the devastating nature of that combination. But we're here to tell you—and we have science on our side—that your kiddos will be alright. Read on, pause for some deep breaths, and trust in the resilience of your beautiful and strong little ones.

### Your kids will be okay if...

#### You parent from the couch. Or your bed. ---

Recovering from surgery? Not feeling well from chemo or radiation? Some experts say that even 10 minutes of your full attention will go a long way in filling your child's cup. But when your energy is too low, consider this: boredom is a breeding ground for creativity. Some experts even endorse "[lazy parenting](#)"—stepping back and letting kids gain independence. This can certainly be practiced from the couch. Other studies show that unless we do something totally nuts, [we're not going to screw up our kids](#). We're not saying your presence as a parent isn't important. But we are saying that **whatever love and attention you are able to give your kids — is enough.**

#### You spend time taking care of yourself. ---

You have to secure your own oxygen mask before helping others. And right now — you might need **ALL. THE. OXYGEN.** And that's okay. [Parents need self-care](#) to recharge in normal times. If you're navigating cancer treatment, you need even more. **To be your best self and best parent for your child, you must take care of you first.**

#### They lean on another loving adult for a while. ---

If you are away from your kids — in the hospital, recovering away from home, traveling for treatment, etc.—they'll also be okay. [Research](#) shows that kids need a secure attachment with one loving adult. While of course you want that to be you, your child will be okay if they transfer that attachment to your co-parent, a grandparent, or another close family member or friend. For a few days. Or weeks. Or as long as needed. **(And no, they won't forget about you in the meantime).**

#### They watch more TV than usual. ---

You can also change this sentence to: they eat more junk food. Or: they drink formula. Or: the list goes on and on. If a global pandemic taught us anything, it's that if our kids spend more time than usual doing XYZ — they'll be alright. Kids thrive on routines — but there's no rule saying we can't change those routines when needed. Find the ones that work. And when life changes again, find new ones. [Research](#) in the child development world shows that as long as a child's environment is "good enough"— **they'll be just fine.**

#### You tell them the truth. ---

There's no right or wrong way here, and you know your kids best. But they're perceptive little creatures, and they often know when something is wrong. If you don't address it, they may feel scared or confused. They may feel that way if you *do* address it — but then they'll have you to [guide the conversation](#), talk to them in a way they understand, and make them feel safe. Young kids develop through relationships — keeping yours truthful and caring will help them express themselves and problem solve, and continue to grow. **And to be okay.**

**Deep breaths. One day at a time. Do your best. Repeat this mantra:**  
**the kids will be okay.**