

Children's Brain Tumor Foundation Bereaved Sibling Mentor Program

The challenges of brain tumor treatment and loss will impact parents, siblings, and family members for a lifetime, CBTF is here to help.

UNITED STATES, November 10, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Children's Brain Tumor Foundation ([CBTF](#)) announced they received a \$20,000 grant from The New York Life Foundation that will be used for the upcoming creation of the Bereaved Sibling Mentor Program. The program will provide purpose through professional clinical mentor training for bereaved siblings and offer peer support to others. In addition, CBTF is excited to collaborate with other hospitals and organizations to bring bereaved siblings together and make it easier to make connections.

Pediatric brain and spinal cord tumors are the second most common type of childhood cancer. Unfortunately, one-third of children diagnosed with a brain tumor will not survive. The challenges of brain tumor treatment and loss will impact parents, siblings, and family members for a lifetime.

Siblings are generally not included in programs during their sibling's treatment, survivorship, or bereavement. Currently, there are no national programs to meet bereaved siblings' needs. They express feelings of isolation and challenges in expressing their emotions.

Bereaved siblings suffer as they try to understand a life-changing loss and the impact it will have on their parents, all while grieving the loss of a brother or sister and feeling different from their peers. Sibling relationships are supposed to be the longest relationships of a lifetime...they are supposed to continue past the loss of a parent. Siblings are faced with unique challenges depending on their age and development. When a sibling loses a brother or sister during childhood or adolescence, he or she will re-process the loss repeatedly while growing older, reaching new developmental phases, and experiencing life events without their siblings.

For families going through treatment, loss often begins at diagnosis as children experience numerous physical and mental changes. The whole family will experience secondary losses within their homes, schools, and careers. When a child dies, bereaved parents are faced with the most difficult loss. This devastating, traumatic loss leads to isolation and pain that stays with them for a lifetime. Feelings of hope and joy seem impossible to feel again.

CBTF created a supportive community to meet the needs of bereaved parents to decrease

isolation, increase connections, and create a community of support where parents can relate with each other and offer guidance in a way only bereaved parents can. CBTF's programming gives parents hope as they make connections with each other and hear how other bereaved parents live with grief while finding joy again. Programming includes one-on-one support, grief education, a bereaved parent mentor program, a private bereavement community on Facebook, and an online memorial page. Additionally, CBTF offers two virtual bereaved parent groups per month, one collaborating with the Marc Jr Foundation. In-person gatherings for bereaved parents will resume soon. CBTF knows loss will impact the siblings forever.

If you or a family you know is grieving the loss of a child due to a brain or spinal cord tumor, please reach out to Jessica Elder at jelder@cbtf.org or call 212-448-9494 to learn more about support and programming offered by the Children's Brain Tumor Foundation.

About CBTF

The Children's Brain Tumor Foundation (CBTF) was founded in 1988 by dedicated parents, physicians, and friends. Our mission is to improve the treatment, quality of life, and the long-term outlook for children with brain and spinal cord tumors through research support, education, and advocacy to families and survivors. In addition to providing funds to research a cure, CBTF is the nation's leader in quality-of-life programs for families impacted by brain and spinal cord tumors. We support families from the day of diagnosis and throughout the brain tumor journey.

Bridget Ryley

Children's Brain Tumor Foundation

+1 212-448-9494

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