

SURVIVING CANCER IS NOT ENOUGH

Childhood and Adolescent Cancer

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

The survivor population

Around **1,000** children and adolescents are diagnosed with cancer in Australia every year.

Around **20,000** Australians live with a history of childhood and adolescent cancer, with this number growing by up to **20%** over the next decade, yet dedicated survivorship funding remains fragmented and inadequately documented.

The health burden

Nearly **80%** of childhood and adolescent cancer survivors experience at least one long-term health problem. Late effects of childhood and adolescent cancer include:

- Chronic physical conditions
- Heart disease
- Secondary cancers
- Neurocognitive and learning difficulties
- Mental health issues and illness
- Poorer social and emotional wellbeing
- Growth and developmental disorders
- Fertility impairment

Up to 10 times higher mortality rates than their peers, even decades after treatment.

60% of brain and spinal cord tumour survivors treated with radiation therapy fail to achieve functional independence in adulthood.

The financial impact

29% of families report financial strain from direct medical expenses.

Around 68% of parents experience significant employment disruptions or barriers to re-entering the workforce after their child's cancer diagnosis.

The employment barrier

One-third of adult survivors of childhood cancer are not in paid employment globally.

The fragmented care system

Only 50% of general practitioners feel confident managing childhood cancer survivors.

Nearly half of survivors report difficulty finding knowledgeable community healthcare providers.

No comprehensive national framework exists for survivorship care.

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Sources for KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

Around 1,000 children and adolescents are diagnosed with cancer in Australia every year.

This statement requires two sources as Australia cancer registries report on children (0-14) and AYA (15-25) separately:

- For ages 0-14: Approximately 828 children were diagnosed with cancer annually in Australia between 2017 and 2021 - [Australian Childhood Cancer Registry Report](#) (June 2023) on Childhood Cancer Statistics in Australia 1983-2021.
- For ages 15-19: About 900 adolescent and young adults aged 15-24 are diagnosed with cancer in Australia (2007-2011), which also states that 15-19 year-olds account for roughly 40-45% of all AYA cancers, leading to the estimation of 360-400 cases per year - [Cancer Data: Adolescents and Young Adults in Australia](#) (2017).

1 in every 1,000 Australians under age 50 lives with a history of cancer diagnosed between the age of 0-14.

- Youlden DR et al. *Pediatric Blood & Cancer*. 2024;70(7):e30383

Over 20,000 Australians live with the lifelong consequences of childhood and adolescent cancer, with this number growing by up to 20% over the next decade, yet dedicated survivorship funding remains fragmented and inadequately documented.

This statement requires multiple sources re: children vs adolescent:

- For ages 0-14: Youlden DR, et al. *Pediatr Blood Cancer*. 2024;7(14):e30889
- For ages 15-24: Holland LR, et al. *J Adolesc Young Adult Oncol*. 2021;19(6):629-644

Nearly 80% of childhood and adolescent cancer survivors experience at least one long-term health problem. Late effects of childhood and adolescent cancer include...

- Signorelli C et al. *Oncologist*. 2023;28(5):e276-e286 – AU study

Up to 10 times higher mortality rates than their peers, even decades after treatment.

This statement requires multiple sources:

- Reulen RC et al. *JAMA*. 2010;304(2):172-9 – 10.7 times higher in British cohort
- Fidler MM et al. *BMJ*. 2016;354:i4351 – 9.1 times higher in British cohort
- Wilson CL et al. *Med J Aust*. 2010;193(5):258-263 – 7.5 times in Australian cohort

60% of brain and spinal cord tumour survivors treated with radiation therapy fail to achieve functional independence in adulthood.

- Brinkman TM et al. *J Clin Oncol*. 2018;36(27):2762-2769

SURVIVING CANCER IS NOT ENOUGH

Childhood and Adolescent Cancer Sources cont. for KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

29% of families report financial strain from direct medical expenses.

- McNeil RJ et al. Social Work Research. 2019;43(1):17-30 – AU study

Around 68% of parents experience significant employment disruptions or barriers to re-entering the workforce after their child's cancer diagnosis.

- Kelada L et al. Pediatric Blood & Cancer. 2020;67(10):e28345

Only 50% of general practitioners feel confident managing childhood cancer survivors.

- Signorelli C et al. Oncologist. 2018;24(5):710-719 – AU study

Nearly half of survivors report difficulty finding knowledgeable community healthcare providers.

- Redkite. The Hidden Health Crisis (2021)

One-third of adult survivors of childhood cancer are not in paid employment globally.

- Godono A et al. Cancers (Basel). 2022;14(18):4586

Surviving cancer is not enough

Over 20,000 Australians live with the lifelong consequences of childhood and adolescent cancer, yet dedicated survivorship research and care remain fragmented and underfunded. In an unprecedented, united front, over 18 organisations have endorsed a national position statement calling for survivorship to be a core part of every cancer care plan, roadmap and research agenda.

Surviving cancer is not enough – survivors and families need coordinated lifelong care to thrive.

View Survivorship Position Statement
on the [CoLab Website](#)



**Children's
Cancer CoLab**

Accelerating research, innovation and collaboration