

Parenting During Cancer and COVID-19: Resources to Help with School-Aged Children

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Presented by:



SHARSHERET[®]
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Parenting During Cancer and COVID-19: Resources to Help with School-Aged Children

Elana Silber:

Hi, welcome everyone. Still have some music for the latecomers. My name is Elana Silber, and I am the CEO of Sharsheret. We are the national Jewish breast and ovarian cancer organization. I am really glad to see you all and I know some of you on the call are sharing this recording with others afterwards, because this is a tricky time for some people with young children. So I really appreciate those of you who will be sharing this recording. This webinar about parenting during cancer and COVID-19 is being recorded. We are mindful of your privacy. So if you would like to participate in this anonymously, please feel free to. Most of you have done this, to put your videos, take off the video and you can change your name. We do have a chat open, you can add questions along the way. But we're recording this so people can access it when it's a time that's most convenient to them.

Elana Silber:

I mean, this topic is huge. The stress from so many different angles. Being a parent is stressful just to begin with managing kids, and then managing them with so many of us sheltering in place and so many of us working from home now because of corona and then also to be dealing with a cancer diagnosis and treatment. There's a lot going on and to have the opportunity to hear from experts in the field on how to manage all the different components of what we're dealing with is tremendously important. So, we are very grateful to have Dr. Lewis and Dr. Tercyak here with us.

Elana Silber:

I also want to remind those of you on the call that as this pandemic continues and as your cancer journey goes on, Sharsheret has an incredible team of social workers and a genetic counselor who are available and eager to speak with you about parenting through cancer, and really any of the issues that you are trying to manage. You are not alone. We are here for you. Our number is (866) 474-2774. Or you could email us at clinicalstaff@sharsheret.org. You can also find us on Facebook, Instagram. Really wherever you are, we are.

Elana Silber:

In addition to that, for those of you on the call today, we have a special program called Busy Box. Busy Box addresses the needs of parents who are raising young children through their own cancer. These are toys and games to keep kids busy while mom's at the doctor or resting after treatment, and resources to help through parenting. Some of the things that we'll be mentioning on the call today will be also included in those resources. So if you would like to order a free Busy Box, it will be delivered to your house and tailored to the age of your children. There is a link that's going up in the chat and you can order this resource. It's tremendously helpful to get this mailed to your house. The kids will like it and you will like it, and it's a start of our conversations and you can reach out to us.

Elana Silber:

I just want to give a couple of thank yous. Sharsheret is doing these webinars over the last few weeks, two times a week and we really want to thank our sponsors and our partners. We're partnering with Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center at Georgetown University. Longtime partners, really instrumental in Sharsheret developing programs for young women at Georgetown University, and the Jess and Mildred Fisher Center For Hereditary Cancer and Clinical Genomics Research. The webinar is also sponsored by the Siegmund and Edith Blumenthal Memorial Fund, Daiichi Sankyo, Eisai, GSK, and Seattle Genetics.

Parenting During Cancer and COVID-19: Resources to Help with School-Aged Children

Elana Silber:

On the call today we have two experts, Dr. Kenneth Tercyak. He is a pediatric psychologist and prevention researcher at Georgetown University's Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, and Dr. Julie Lewis, who is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Washington DC who specializes in anxiety and mood disorders in children, adolescents, and adults. So again, if you have questions, put them in the chat, we'll address them at the end of the call after their presentations. And I would like to now turn the floor over to our experts. Thank you.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

Thank you, Elana, very much. Both Dr. Lewis and I want to extend our thanks and our appreciation to the Sharsheret community for the chance to speak with you today. We all recognize that these are very unsettling times, not just locally, but across the US and around the globe. What began as a national health crisis quickly spread to a pandemic that caused us to retreat from our daily lives in unimaginable ways. And just as some communities were slowly beginning to show signs of recovery and reopening from the novel coronavirus, we were sharply reminded of the divisions and contrasts that still exist in our society. As parents, we're often called on to help interpret what's happening around us in our lives and the lives of our children.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

Now, undoubtedly COVID-19 has caused some fear and anxiety and uncertainty in all of us, including our children. And during these stressful times, no matter what their age, we want you to remember that children appreciate understanding, and we want to have some fundamentals to be able to give some backdrop to this circumstance. What am I referring to? I'm referring to kids needing to know things like, am I safe? Are my parents and is my family safe? And how will this situation influence my daily life?

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

Now, not all children will or can choose to express themselves through their words. In fact, we often need to help children identify and to label what they're feeling and to translate their feelings from how they're behaving. What we do and what we say as parents every day, and especially now, matters, and really during these moments. With these fundamentals, we hope that this webinar is going to offer you and your family some additional guidance and some reassurance for your children, when and where possible, both about cancer and about COVID-19.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

As parents, we recognize that it's important that we talk with our kids about issues that affect our health, and that we take the time to address children's concerns in ways that they can appreciate and understand. Dr. Lewis and I both want to share some background information that we think is useful in having conversations about family health, such as the ones that I've referred to. Being a parent and having cancer often brings up a lot of worry in the family about health, about safety, and especially about what the future holds. COVID can act like a magnifying glass on that worry and on that uncertainty.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

Although it might seem hard to find the right ways and the right things to do to help support your children, we want you to remember this. When it comes to your child, you are the expert. You know their behavior best, and that includes what they need. Children of different ages are going

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to adjust in different ways and they will often surprise us with their insight and their perspective and of course their honesty. It might help everyone to hear this, and it really bears repeating. There is no one right way to talk with your children and your teenagers about cancer. What is most important is to be honest with them.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

Now, here at Georgetown, we do a lot of work counseling with moms who carry BRCA and other cancer risk genes. Some of them are also going through treatment for their cancer. Others are in recovery and in survivorship. Some may be preparing for a surgery or a prophylactic surgery as well. All have been empowered by their genetic knowledge. Time and time again we've learned how difficult it can seem for parents to share with children the news about a harmful gene change or a cancer diagnosis in a parent or a relative, or even a recurrence in the family. Adults sometimes work furiously to try to protect children from this type of information by not discussing it.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

We know that kids are very perceptive. When we try to avoid things and not openly discuss them, they may inevitably sense that there's a change in the family. And sometimes their imaginations might be more scary than the truth. There are resources that you can turn to for support in addition to your healthcare team. And this might be the right time to ask for that support, especially when you feel that you need it. The bottom line is to think about how you can involve your children in healthy ways and to let them know what's happening. Keep those lines of communication open, especially in times like this.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

In some ways these principles that we want to talk with you about regarding parenting during cancer can also serve as models for how to assist families in times of other crises, such as this COVID pandemic. And although no family wants this to feel familiar or comfortable or for it to be the new normal, the everyday reality for many families dealing with cancer is that unpredictability and vigilance toward their health are already part of their everyday lives.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

Now for children, we feel that physical preparations can be equally important to any emotional preparations that we do. When I speak with families I ask them, "How can we turn what's happening right now into a source of strength for your kids?" To give them a chance to demonstrate their resilience, to validate their frustrations, but also to help them find a way to take control of a situation and to give them a sense of purpose. This may look different in your family than from someone else's. For some children, that might mean being an extra helper to a parent or to a sibling or to a family member.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

Perhaps it means them taking on a new responsibility around the home, or looking outward to the greater community at large, volunteering by writing thank you letters to mom or dad's healthcare workers, healthcare workers at local hospitals, or even donating time to cancer and COVID causes. There are lots of ways that children can be part of something bigger, and that helps them connect their experience at home to what's taking place outside. Through acts of doing and giving back, it can help children to maintain their feeling of stability and good mental health during unpredictable times.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

I want to talk about anxiety. It seems as though this word has unfortunately become part of our national vocabulary, but I do want to make sure that we're all on the same page. So what do I mean when I say anxiety? It's an emotion, it's feelings of tension and it's worried thoughts. Anxiety can also be more than feelings. It is a byproduct of our body's natural fight or flight response and that's something that protects us when we sense danger or a threat. We've all experienced it at one point or another: a pounding heart, sweating, stomach upset, and more. As parents, it's important that we're listening for and equally important that we're listening to our children's anxieties.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

In a moment I'll turn this over to Dr. Lewis. But before I do that, I want to make a few comments about some ways to help children control their general anxiety during times of change, be that of cancer diagnosis in a parent, living with concerns about COVID, or adjusting to a new normal way of life that maybe doesn't involve as much socialization or schooling or outside activities. The first is to ask your child what they know about COVID-19 and to provide basic information. Chances are, by now they think they've heard it all. But I would ask you, have they? There will be some myths and you can help dispel those myths by focusing on the facts. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has many, many useful resources online, including a page that's devoted to keeping children healthy during the COVID-19 outbreak. It has good information for parents that they can share with their children.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

An important component of that is our second point, which really relates to prevention. We want you to be a role model for your children in many ways, and to be a role model for actions that they can take now. That includes the basics: washing hands, using hand sanitizer, wearing a mask, practicing social distancing, and following the other CDC guidelines. Children look to the adults in their lives to set those examples, and that includes during this time as well. A related point is to manage your own feelings about what's happening in the world right now, and not to let your anxiety become contagious in your family. We would encourage parents to talk it out. To talk it out with a spouse or a partner, a friend, a peer supporter, and to take advantage of the resources that are available to help with some coping skills and adjustment to cancer, including those that are offered by Sharsheret.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

In doing that, we want to acknowledge that children have legitimate concerns right now, and it is okay for them to be concerned about themselves and for them to be concerned about you. Showing empathy for other people is an important quality. And having that ability to understand and to respond to other people's feelings, it's a fundamental part of growing up, like learning to read. And in fact, it can often lead to positive change and it can elevate the dynamics in our relationships.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

With that in mind is our last point, and that is to be open. To be open to more questions as situations change, and provide realistic grounded reassurance. I know this is not the first hard situation that you as parents have had to live through, or your child has had to live through, or that your family has faced. Maybe not on this magnitude, but you've have had examples in the past that you can draw on. Raising school aged children and teens, it gives you lots and lots of

practice, not only about what to say, but also how to say things in ways that you can predict how they may respond.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

We've all made mistakes. We've all been there, but hopefully we've learned some lessons from those past missteps about how we can do it better next time. So I would ask, what lessons have you learned previously that you can apply here? And if you can't think of any, then how can you educate yourself as a parent to get the information that you need to keep those lines of communication open with your child? Again, there are many, many good resources out there, including Sharsheret programs, participating in webinars like this and other opportunities, connecting with your healthcare team, talking with the people who are in your network and in your community and even online who were available to support you and your child in your journey together.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

I'd now like to invite my colleague, Dr. Lewis, to share her thoughts on this and to offer some additional discussion points and strategies, both for managing anxiety, but also for recognizing the warning signs of increasing stress in children.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Thanks Dr. Tercyak and thank you all so much for inviting me today. I've been really excited to share some thoughts with all of you. As Elana said, I'm in private practice in Washington DC and I work with kids and teens and adults. And one thing that's really struck me in the last few months with working with my clients is that the parents of young kids have had just a really, really hard time. It's just so, so hard to be a parent right now of young children, especially if you're also working and certainly if you're also trying to manage cancer at the same time. So, I just sort of wanted to say that I really empathize with what everybody is dealing with.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

My part of the talk today, I'm going to quickly just go over some good general parenting practices to keep in mind that are just sort of always good practices, but especially now, and then I'm going to go over some strategies to help manage anxiety. If you're seeing some anxiety and worry in your children, we're going to talk about some good strategies to help with that. And then finally, I want to talk about some red flags, some signals that your child may need some professional help, so that you'll kind of know what to look for.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Some of what I'm going to say is a reiteration of some of the things that Dr. Tercyak said. In terms of good parenting practices, we definitely want to bring our empathy hat out. We want to validate our kids' feelings of fear, of boredom, frustration, grief, sadness, right? There's been a lot of losses. And it's okay to let them know that they're not only entitled to those feelings, but you may share them too. So, I think empathy is just really, really, really important right now. Optimism is also important to convey, that you've confidence that you'll get through this together. As Dr. Tercyak said, your families [inaudible 00:20:51], and also that tough times can often bring out the best in people. So it's important for kids to hear that you're optimistic.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

A third point is something called collaborative problem solving. When there are problems that come up like too much screen time or some sibling conflicts, which I'm sure a lot of people are experiencing right now as we're all kind of stuck at home, it's really important to invite kids to join in to the problem solving process so that you can have your list of ideas of how to solve a specific problem, and they might have their own list and you can get together and talk about how those lists overlap. This teaches kids a lot about flexible thinking and it also significantly increases their buy in to whatever resolution you come up with if they've been part of that problem solving process.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Another point is flexibility. You don't have to throw your parent book out the window right now, but this is definitely a time for maximum flexibility. Being flexible about some of your usual rules. Again, back to screen time and watching TV and things like that. Knowing that this is hopefully temporary and you can always make adjustments later. It's okay to not be your sort of best parent right now in terms of all the rules that you have thoughtfully come up with for your children. And finally, as Dr. Tercyak said, please take care of yourself. It's so, so important that you get social support and exercise and things you need to do for stress management, both so that you're resilient physically and emotionally, and can model good coping for your children.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Now I'm going to talk about some good strategies to help manage anxiety if you notice that your child is anxious or worried, or you suspect he or she might be. I call them the 3 Cs: containment, control and calm, and those are just sort of umbrella terms for a grouping of strategies. First, containment. One of the things I do in my practice a lot with children who are worried is we externalize it. We give the worry voice a name, in this case maybe the corona bully would be appropriate, but they should come up with it themselves. And you can tell the kids that corona bullies or their worry voice tend to catastrophize, which is a big word for just saying, imagine the worst case scenario. And so you can talk to them about what their worry voices say.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Worry time is a strategy that I use a lot for kids who have a lot of worries where you might schedule worry time with your child once or twice a day to talk about their worries, and that way you can help contain the worry as opposed to kind of trying to talk about it all day long. You can schedule worry time and the child can come to you and you can talk about what their worries are, and you can offer them some reassurance of that during that time. And then you can reverse roles so that you're the worrier and your child is the one who's listening and kind of offering reassurance. And again, reassurance using facts, not just, "Oh, everything's going to be okay." But facts, things you know about what's going on with the virus and what's going on in general. So, you can use that worry time to help your child with those worries.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Sometimes it's helpful for kids to keep journals or logs of their worries, and then they can refer to that journal or that log during worry time. But they have, again, the idea is containment. You're helping them find a way to download those worries and keep them to specific times during the day so that they don't spill out all the time and interfere and interrupt what their activities are. I would also really recommend limiting and monitoring their exposure to news. Especially young children, they may not know how to put the news into some context. And so, you just want to be really mindful of what they're being exposed to or what they're hearing from other children or social media if your children are doing some of that.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

And the last point in terms of containment is to continue old routines as much as possible. So things like bedtime and wake time and mealtimes. Kids really, really crave structure and routine and it's very reassuring to them to know that their general daily milestones are happening. It's also really, really nice to have some new routines right now in this context that you can keep up with like taco Tuesday or family game nights or special TV shows or things like that, or even writing in a gratitude journal together as a family. So old routines and new routines, but the emphasis here is on routine and structure.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

The second umbrella of strategies is control, which is a way of sort of managing the uncertainty that we all feel right now by focusing on where we have control. As Dr. Tercyak said, we certainly can talk about where we have control in terms of our risks of getting sick, control in terms of taking safety precautions like masks and social distancing and things like that. We can't say for sure that we won't get sick, but we can focus on the ways that we're mitigating that risk. As I mentioned before, healthy sleep and eating habits and those kinds of routines are really, really important ways to focus. Getting exercise, making sure that our kids are getting outside and just taking care of themselves.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Connecting with friends in creative ways is a really, really useful way of managing anxiety. I've heard about all kinds of really creative ways kids are getting together with friends, such as playing games on Zoom, sharing books or toys amongst like a group of children or families, taking bike rides, going through sprinklers. As the summer goes on, there may be more and more ways to do that safely. Empowering kids to help with family tasks like cooking, cleaning and things like that. As Dr. Tercyak said, kids really, really like feeling like they're helping and that they have a really important role to play in the family. And so it's really empowering to give them jobs.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

It's also, as Dr. Tercyak said, it's nice if they can get involved in community in some way, helping collect donations or helping with elderly neighbors. It just really, again, increases their self-efficacy to feel hopeful. It's just something they can do to take some control over a situation where there is so little control. And then finally be creative. There are some really neat things that have come out in the last couple of months that are available to kids and to all of us, like a virtual museum tour, things online, planting a garden now that it's summer, buying something new like a new gadget for the kitchen or a slip and slide for the backyard. And I have friends who even hired a magician to entertain their family on Zoom. So there's all kinds of interesting ways of being creative right now.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

And finally, the last category of strategies is calm, ways to tell our nervous systems that it's okay to be calm and to relax. There's yoga. There are ways to do yoga as a family. Just finding a video or a YouTube channel that can help you set yourselves up with some yoga. Mindfulness or meditation apps that you can put on your phone. Some of my favorites are, Insight Timer is a nice one for kids, Buddhify, and there's another one called Calm that I really like that has all kinds of interesting and good mindfulness scripts on that app.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

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There's belly breathing, which is something that I do a lot with kids. Slow abdominal breathing is a great way to alert your brain that it can relax. I love blowing bubbles with kids. When you blow bubbles, you are taking that slow abdominal breath, and that's a great way to teach kids how that would feel. Listening to music, reading, doing art projects or drawing or coloring. Those are all great ways to slow down and try to relax. And most of all using humor, that's such a great anxiety buster. If you're laughing, you're not likely to be so anxious.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

And finally I just want to talk briefly about warning signs or what I call red flags that your child is really struggling and may need some professional help. These are signs that aren't sort of one off, rough day or rough night, but sort of persistent over time. The first one is that the intensity of anger or sadness or frustration or tearfulness is really out of proportion to the trigger. Two, the child repeatedly asks for reassurance often in the form of what if questions and can't seem to internalize the reassurance that you give. That you find yourself consoling your child a lot. That would be potentially a red flag.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Another one is physical symptoms that might include headaches or stomach aches that may be connected to certain triggers. Again, being exposed to the news or you coming back from your treatment or whatever it might be, but certainly headaches and tummy aches can be signals of anxiety, but you have to do some detective work to figure out what they're connected to. Sleep disruption is a big one for kids. Frequent nightmares. Requests for you or another parent to sit with the child until he or she falls asleep, that can be a sign. And then finally excessive avoidance of things that your child would normally do, including things they really like to do, like playing a favorite game or connecting with friends or grandparents. If you find yourself in the role of coaxing your child to do normal activities, that might be a sign that he or she needs some extra help. So those are some thoughts that I wanted to share.

Elana Silber:

Thank you so much Dr. Lewis and Dr. Tercyak. Just a reminder for anyone on the call, if you have any specific questions, you can put them into the chat. But we did actually get a few in advance, so I'm going to pose those question. And some of these you addressed but specifically they wanted some good ways to encourage independence in an 11-year-old girl who's dealing with concerns for her mom and also that her social world has abruptly changed. She has distance learning and camp is canceled and she doesn't know middle school is going to go. So is there any way to encourage independence? These are things, a lot of things that you spoke about are doing them together, what can we do on our own?

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Should I take this one Dr. Tercyak?

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

Sure.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Okay. Yeah, 11 year old is such a great age because an 11 year old is really capable of doing a lot of things independently, but also still pretty connected, can still play games and do a lot of things that younger kids enjoy. I wonder about if an 11 year old would maybe be able to come

up with ways of helping either friends or neighbors with their younger children. For example, coming up with like camp ideas or something where they can maybe on Zoom like do a magic show or read a book, read a story to a younger child. Doing something like teaching a craft or teaching a skill either in a social distance kind of way in a backyard or even over Zoom. I'm sure a lot of parents with young kids would so appreciate having an entertaining 11 year old help them with their young kids.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Another thing that I had mentioned, sort of helping with donations, helping with their community and elderly neighbors, feeling really helpful. Another idea is maybe keeping a COVID journal. I don't think I mentioned that before, but that's something I've been really encouraging kids to do. Writing down their own thoughts and feelings and experiences, clipping newspaper articles or images that they've gotten off the web. It's a great way of keeping busy right now and doing something meaningful. And I also think their future selves will really thank them for it. I think it's going to be a really important time for people to document their own experience. Those are some thoughts I've had.

Elana Silber:

And Dr. Lewis, you had brought up the red flag. So if someone is identifying that their child has something that might need professional help, what's the best way to go around it and also to find someone? We don't want to ask our friends. Are you finding that now with the easing restrictions that they're doing face to face, or this would also be another thing that they would put their kid on Zoom who may even be experiencing Zoom fatigue? How do they interact with the professional?

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Well, I'm certainly still doing telehealth. That seems to be the best practice right now to continue to see people over Zoom. It is hard. The Zoom fatigue is real. I think it might be easier now that kids are generally done with school and are no longer being asked to do school online. But I do think most therapists probably are practicing telehealth right now. The good news is it's easier to find people because people have a little more flexibility and you don't have to get yourself to an office. In terms of how to find somebody, a lot of pediatricians keep lists of therapists in their offices and they can try to help you find someone. Psychology Today runs referral lists online. You can just go to Psychology Today and look for referrals. The Anxiety and Depression Association of America has a list of referrals specifically for therapists who focus on anxiety and specialize in that. And then there's local mental health resources that I'm sure would be helpful in terms of finding somebody.

Elana Silber:

Okay. And Sharsheret social workers, we don't work with the children, we tend to work with parents to provide coping skills. A question just came in online. What advice do you have for parents with a 14-year-old adolescent, especially when they do not want to be cooperative?

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Well, we could do a whole other talk on adolescents because I think it is different having teens right now. Again, I go back to the collaborative problem solving. If you have a teenager who you think should be doing things they're not doing or there's lots of conflict, the main thing is to build a collaborative relationship with that teen because if you try to impose something on them, it will

often backfire. But I'm happy to, we can talk more about teens but I do think that it's a different talk.

Elana Silber:

Right. And then another question came in. Someone who has a younger child, I think middle school also, who is having fits and needs some immediate way to calm the kid down. Like overall the calm and all that is helpful, but what about in the moment, is there something that you could recommend? I know that at Sharsheret sometimes our social workers offer metaphors and other ways to address it. Is there something in the moment because there's a lot of anxiety because mom may not be as helpful as she normally would be because she's dealing with her own issues and the kid is having a fit. What do you do to dissipate that in the moment?

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Yeah. I mean, it might be really helpful to work with somebody around that because I would really want to know what the triggers are and what the patterns are. There may be a lot that might be helpful in knowing what leads up to it, because basically it's really hard, sometimes in the moment when somebody is at code red, to calm them down. It's easier if you can be more preemptive and proactive, if possible. That being said, I still like my belly breathing if the child is willing. Even if you hold your child and start doing deep breathing together where you're doing the breathing and you're just holding your child, you're not talking, you're not trying to persuade them of something or do anything, you're just holding your child and breathing. Eventually they will calm down and start matching that low slow breath. But I would encourage that the person who asked that, maybe there may be more that could be helpful in terms of understanding more about the particular situation and context.

Elana Silber:

Right. Okay. We're almost out of time, but I want... We had some other questions that came in, but I think Dr. Lewis and Dr. Tercyak covered it in their presentations. And if you could send out the list of those resources, we'd be happy to share them when this is recorded on Sharsheret website. Also, all of our webinars, including today's, will be posted. Sharsheret has a special section on virtual resources. And we also have, speaking to what Dr. Lewis said, we have some younger people who are doing some storytelling and activities. So I think in addition to the physical Busy Box that you will order from today's webinar or any time, we also have some virtual Busy Box activity. So if there are some of you on the call with younger children, that might be another resource for you to already start to put to good use that tips and tricks that Dr. Lewis and Dr. Tercyak shared with us.

Elana Silber:

I know these are very high anxiety times and we're not going to solve the problem in 43 minutes, but we are bringing it to the forefront. COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on all our lives and mental health has taken a huge hit. And this is real and it's something we need to talk about. So just having you on the call today is the first step. We are here for you. We continue to be with you. Even though we all are apart, we're here for you. All of our services are available online by telephone from the safety of your homes or your offices if you're allowed back or wherever you are. You definitely should refer those of you who mentioned that you can't have your friends on at this time of day, please remind them of this webinar. We'll also send out a reminder.

Elana Silber:

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We have upcoming webinars in the next couple of weeks. We'll carry out one about creating a caring community for those in need, that's June 16th. And also beauty hacks, which is a demo and Q&A with Sephora's great beauty in the face of cancer, and that's June 18th. So we're doing a combination of these very educational and experiential webinars to keep you up to date, keep you calm, address your anxiety. But anxiety is real and it's okay and we can help. We wish everyone continued good health. Please feel free to order your Busy Box. Thank you for sharing other issues. In other sessions we see that and we will be happy to address those in an additional webinar. So thank you Dr. Tercyak. Dr. Lewis, thank you for the work that you do and for giving us your time today. And we look forward to continuing the conversation. Have a great day.

Dr. Kenneth Tercyak,:

Thank you. Bye-bye.

Dr. Julie Lewis:

Thank you.

About Sharsheret

Sharsheret, Hebrew for “chain”, is a national non-profit organization, improves the lives of Jewish women and families living with or at increased genetic risk for breast or ovarian cancer through personalized support and saves lives through educational outreach.

With four offices (California, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey), Sharsheret serves 150,000 women, families, health care professionals, community leaders, and students, in all 50 states. Sharsheret creates a safe community for women facing breast cancer and ovarian cancer and their families at every stage of life and at every stage of cancer - from before diagnosis, during treatment and into the survivorship years. While our expertise is focused on young women and Jewish families, more than 15% of those we serve are not Jewish. All Sharsheret programs serve all women and men.

As a premier organization for psychosocial support, Sharsheret’s Executive Director chairs the Federal Advisory Committee on Breast Cancer in Young Women, Sharsheret works closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and participates in psychosocial research studies and evaluations with major cancer centers, including Georgetown University Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. Sharsheret is accredited by the Better Business Bureau and has earned a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for four consecutive years.

Sharsheret offers the following national programs:

The Link Program

- Peer Support Network, connecting women newly diagnosed or at high risk of developing breast cancer one-on-one with others who share similar diagnoses and experiences
- Embrace™, supporting women living with advanced breast cancer • Genetics for Life®, addressing hereditary breast and ovarian cancer
- Thriving Again®, providing individualized support, education, and survivorship plans for young breast cancer survivors • Busy Box®, for young parents facing breast cancer
- Best Face Forward®, addressing the cosmetic side effects of treatment
- Family Focus®, providing resources and support for caregivers and family members
- Ovarian Cancer Program, tailored resources and support for young Jewish women and families facing ovarian cancer • Sharsheret Supports™, developing local support groups and programs

Education and Outreach Programs

- Health Care Symposia, on issues unique to younger women facing breast cancer
- Sharsheret on Campus, outreach and education to students on campus
- Sharsheret Educational Resource Booklet Series, culturally-relevant publications for Jewish women and their families and healthcare Professionals

Disclaimer

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Parenting During Cancer and COVID-19: Resources to Help with School-Aged Children

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