

## MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

### PROCLAMATION NO. 31

Proclaiming September 2025 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in Multnomah County, Oregon.

#### **Multnomah County Finds:**

- A. According to the Center for Disease Control, cancer is the leading cause of death from disease among U.S. children and adolescents younger than 20 years. Each year, this tragic disease is detected in about 15,000 of our country's young people, and takes the life of approximately 1,600 children and adolescents.
- C. The most common types of cancer among children and adolescents differed by age group. For example, leukemias were more common in those ages 1 to 4 than in other age groups and lymphomas were more common in those ages 15 to 19 than in other age groups.
- D. Rates of the most common types of childhood and adolescent cancer also differ by race/ethnicity. For example, in 2017–2021, the incidence rate of leukemia was about twice as high in Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native children and adolescents as in Black children and adolescents. During the same time period, the rates of brain and other nervous system tumors were higher in White and American Indian/Alaska Native children and adolescents than in those of all other racial and ethnic groups.
- E. The good news is that, thanks to breakthroughs and innovations in pediatric oncology, cancer death rates among children from birth to age 14 have dropped nearly 70% over the past 40 years. Today, 85% of children will survive their cancer – which means there are half a million survivors of childhood cancer in the United States today and that number is growing.
- F. For many young patients, pediatric cancer isn't just a diagnosis; it's an ordeal. Intensive treatment regimens and special health considerations often require a complete restructuring of a patient's life, potentially including changes to residence, schooling, finances, diet, and more. Some pediatric cancer patients ultimately have to move to another city or state in order to be closer to uniquely equipped treatment facilities.
- G. There's also the fact that many treatment options for pediatric cancers can be painful or have various negative side effects. Hair loss from chemotherapy, for example, can cause a child to feel self-conscious. The discomfort experienced during treatment may itself inspire feelings of fear, anxiety or despair. Arguably the greatest specter in the mind of any pediatric cancer patient is concern over their future: "Will I survive this disease? If so, how long? What if I relapse? How will treatment impact my quality of life?"

- H. The cumulative impact of these and other factors can result in pediatric cancer patients and survivors developing serious mental health conditions, including depression, chronic anxiety and even post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A study published in the Journal of Pediatric Psychology found that nearly 75% of children diagnosed with cancer experienced PTSD symptoms during or after treatment. These symptoms include nightmares, flashbacks, feelings of isolation, difficulty feeling emotions, and a desire to avoid people, places or things associated with their cancer experience.
- I. This is why the services provided to children undergoing cancer treatment at places like OHSU Doernbecher Children's Hospital, Randall Children's Hospital at Legacy Emanuel, and Shriners Children's Portland extends far beyond treatment, to enhancing the quality of life for these children and their families.
- J. Activities like toy distributions, art therapy, pet assisted therapy, hospital celebrations, and the Hospital School Program offered in partnership with the Multnomah Education Services District, celebrates and honors a child's determination and bravery to fight the battle against cancer, while allowing them to be children.


**Multnomah County Proclaims:**

September 2025 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in Multnomah County, Oregon.

**SIGNED this 3rd day of September, 2025.**



REVIEWED:  
JENNY M. MADKOUR, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By: 

Jenny M. Madkour, County Attorney

**SUBMITTED BY:** Chair Jessica Vega Pederson