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Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center

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FOR THE MEDIA



We offer many kinds of support for children and their families.

Cancer can affect children in many ways. At Memorial Sloan Kettering, our pediatric psychosocial care teams work in concert with the medical teams to meet the individual needs of our patients and families.



Meet Our Teams

Get to know the doctors, nurses, and other world-renowned specialists at MSK Kids.

[Learn more](https://www.mskcc.org/pediatrics/cancer-care/about/teams-experts) (<https://www.mskcc.org/pediatrics/cancer-care/about/teams-experts>)

Our psychosocial care team includes social workers, child life specialists, teachers, chaplains, management and support staff, nurses, physical and occupational therapists, nutritionists, psychiatrists, integrative medicine specialists, patient service coordinators, and patient representatives. In addition to our work with other experts at Memorial Sloan Kettering, we also enlist the support of outside agencies, programs, and organizations to meet the needs of our families.

Our School Program

The Department of Pediatrics at Memorial Sloan Kettering makes [our school program](#) a high priority. As one of 40 hospitals participating in a New York City Department of Education program called Hospital Schools, we have several full-time teachers who play an active role in educating our pediatric patients. For children and teens, school signifies a continuation of normal life, and allows them to keep up with their peers. Our treatment teams consider schooling to be both necessary and therapeutic – school is a child's work.

Social Work and Counseling

At Memorial Sloan Kettering, social workers are assigned to each pediatric medical service to help our patients cope with the emotional, social, and physical impacts of a cancer diagnosis. Our social workers provide counseling and practical assistance, help families cope with their child's disease, improve communication with family and friends, provide information on community resources, and ease the adjustment to medical treatment.

In addition, our specially trained counselors and therapists offer our patients and their families a full spectrum of support services. We can evaluate patients and family members, and provide counseling for emotional problems related to coping with cancer. We also have support groups that meet regularly.

Physical and Occupational Therapy

Children recovering from cancer treatment may need rehabilitation therapy. At Memorial Sloan Kettering, we offer both outpatient and inpatient rehabilitation for our pediatric patients. These services are available throughout treatment, recovery, and life after cancer.

Child Life Services

Child life specialists are trained professionals who are experts in human growth and development. We have a variety of backgrounds and interests including education, psychology, fine arts, and art therapy. We combine our skills and certifications to create comprehensive [child life services](#) that educate and empower patients and family members throughout an illness. The goal of our Child Life Program is to help young patients and their families develop strategies for coping with and adjusting to treatment.

Integrative Medicine

Our child and young adult patients may also benefit from the therapies and classes offered by our [Integrative Medicine Service](#), which complements mainstream medical care by addressing the physical and emotional symptoms associated with cancer and its treatment. We offer music therapy, mind/body therapies, dance and movement therapy, yoga, and other services for our inpatients and outpatients in groups or at the bedside.

Pediatric Pain & Palliative Care

The Pediatric Pain & Palliative Care Team (PACT) focuses on improving the quality of life of our young patients by treating pain and other symptoms using non-pharmacologic techniques, new medications, and innovative procedures. PACT works together with your primary oncology team and can be consulted during any stage of illness.

Spiritual Care Services

Because religion is often an important source of comfort and strength for our patients, Memorial Sloan Kettering offers the services of Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, and Muslim chaplains. We can also arrange visits from clergy of other religions. Our nondenominational chapel is located near the main lobby on the first floor of Memorial Hospital. It is open at all times for meditation and prayer. Religious services are held each week and on all holy days.

Towards Tomorrow Bereavement Program

The death of a child is undoubtedly the most difficult experience a parent could face. The Department of Pediatrics' Towards Tomorrow Program offers support to bereaved families. In the program, a group of parents and Memorial Sloan Kettering staff come together to help cope with the loss of a child.

The multidisciplinary staff who lead the Towards Tomorrow group provide a monthly forum for parents to meet and interact with others who have shared the similar experiences of diagnosis and treatment and now loss and adjustment. Through discussion of wide-ranging topics — such as how to deal with birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, and people in your life — the group helps families navigate this complex journey.

For families who do not live near New York City, the Department of Pediatrics is developing a group of parent-to-parent volunteers to enhance the Towards Tomorrow program outreach. For families who do not live near New York City, the Department of Pediatrics is developing a group of parent-to-parent volunteers to enhance the Towards Tomorrow program outreach. We also have a [regular newsletter](#).

For more information, please call [212-639-6850](tel:212-639-6850) or email towardstomorrow@mskcc.org.