

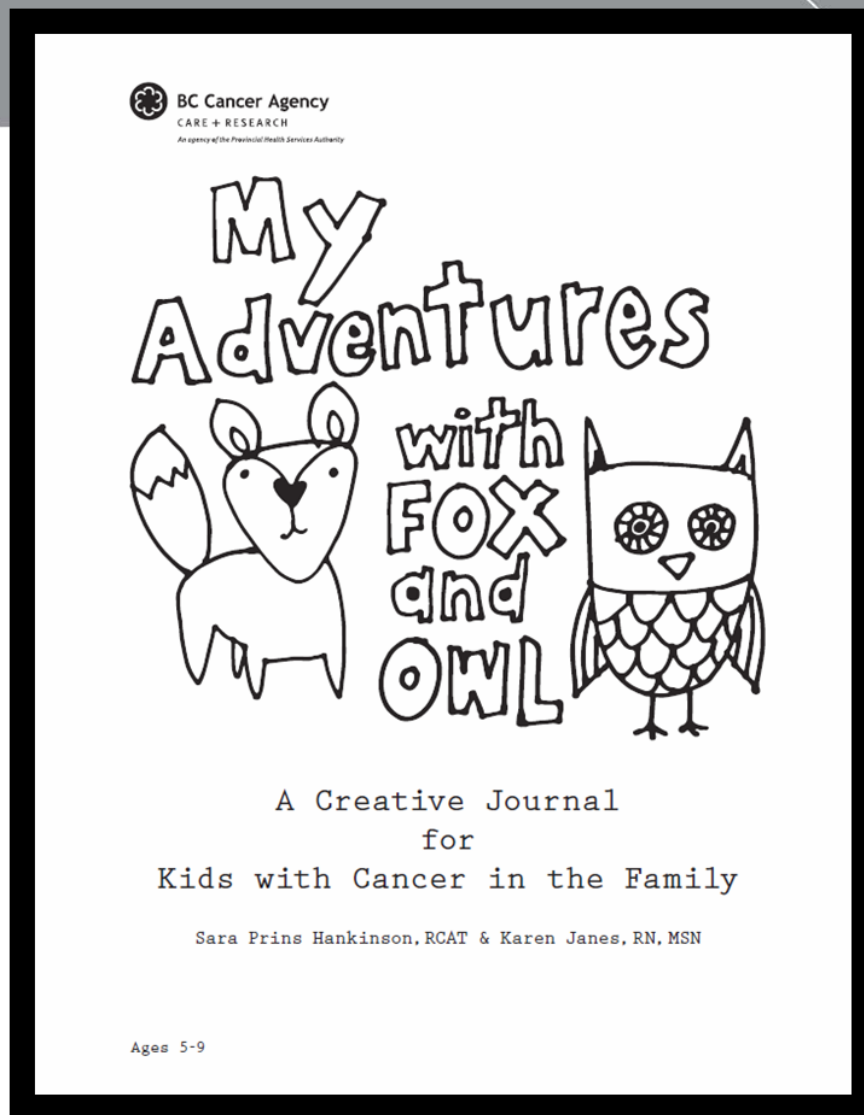
Excerpts from an activity book for children affected by cancer



BC Cancer Agency

CARE + RESEARCH

An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority



Following are 20 pages selected from 'My Adventures with Fox and Owl'. You can purchase the entire 70 page soft-cover book:

- **Online at the C&W Bookstore** -
https://libraries.phsa.ca/bookstore/list?q=topic_facet:Cancer&p=1
(shipping & handling charges will apply)
- **At the Family Resource Centre** at BC Children's Hospital or **Odin Books**, 1110 West Broadway, Vancouver.

Created by the BC Cancer Agency Psychosocial Oncology Program - Copyright 2016

A word to grown-ups
(kids, tear out this page and give it to them!)

This book is designed for children, aged 5-9, who have a family member with cancer. It was designed as a place for them to learn about cancer and ways of coping when cancer comes to the family. Many children and adults have a hard time talking about cancer, so we hope that this book will be good place to learn and facilitate conversation around this difficult topic.

This book is also a place for children to discover more about themselves, their family, their strengths and the support around them. We hope the information and exercises included will equip children to feel more confident and know that they are supported in this difficult time they may be going through. They may wish to use it as a personal journal, or as a book to go through with you or another adult. Please encourage your child to use this book but allow them to use it in a way that is comfortable for them.

This book was written recognizing that cancer has an effect on everyone in the family, and children may react to cancer coming to the family with a wide range of emotions and reactions. (For more about this read "Reaching Out to Your Children When Cancer Comes to Your Family: A Guide for Parents" by June Slakov.) This book attempts to help children name changes and emotions they may be experiencing, normalize them, and find places to look for support.

For this book, we created Fox and Owl and some of their other animal friends in the forest. Fox and Owl are meant to be like friends who can accompany children reading this book through their journey. Recognizing the value of play and humour, we have created them as light-hearted and fun-loving characters that also provide some serious and thoughtful questions and comments.

This book was primarily drawn and written by an art therapist with principles of art therapy in mind. We believe that creating art can help children express themselves in a way that they may not be able to with words. Art can also contribute positively to a child's development, and may foster self-confidence, self-discovery, and growth within them.

Our goal is to support not just cancer patients, but also their family members who are affected by cancer in other ways. We hope this book will help children find resources, which will in turn add to the strength of the whole family.



A few words about this book
(kids, this page is for you!)

This book is for you.

Sometimes life is hard when someone in your family has cancer. So, we thought we'd make a book for you to hopefully make life a little bit better.

In this book you can draw, write, or do anything you want! Sometimes it feels really good to draw and write about what is going on.

You can keep this book all to yourself or share it with your family members.

Here to lead you through this book are Fox and Owl and some of their friends in the forest. We hope you have fun (and learn a few things) when you use this book.



WHAT
is your name?
write it really BIG and CRAZY!





Hoo Hoo Who
is in your family?

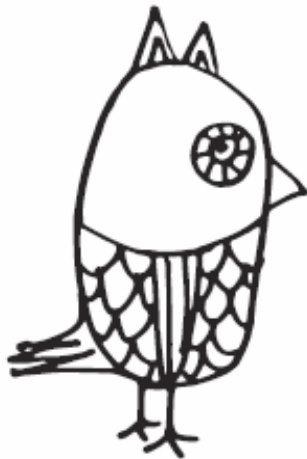
What animals would they be?

What do you think about when you hear the word "cancer"?





WAIT.
What is
cancer?



I don't know
exactly. Let's
go ask
Nurse Bunny.





Nurse Bunny,
what is cancer?

Cancer is a group of over 200 diseases. What they all have in common is that in each disease, cells are not normal so they grow and divide quickly. The cells may group together and form a tumour. Sometimes they keep growing and crowd out normal cells. And sometimes cancer cells can spread to other places in the body.



What kind of cancer
does your family
member have?

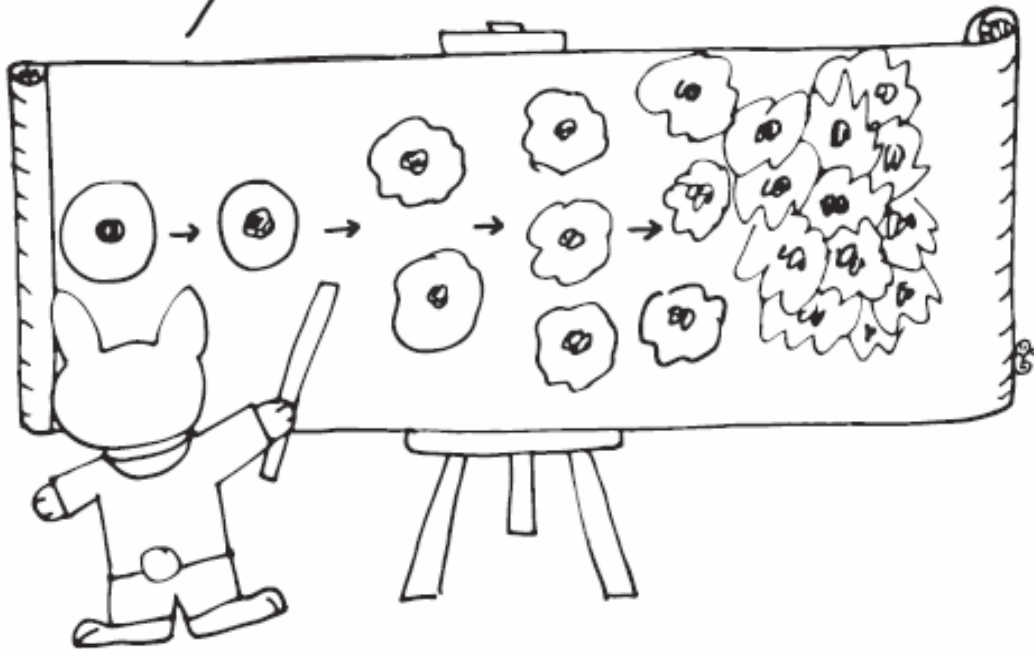


What causes cancer?

Cancer is caused by changes inside the cell which cause it to grow too quickly. These changes may be caused by some chemicals, radiation, air pollution (like smoke), certain viruses and other things inside and outside the body.

Most cancers do not start growing until several of these changes have happened.

There is still a lot we don't know about how cancer begins and what causes it. Scientists are studying and working hard to find the answers!



What can we do to help stay healthy?



There are lots of things that you can do!
Here are a few:

- eat healthy foods (lots of vegetables and fruit!)
- get exercise every day
- protect yourself from the sun
- don't start to smoke
- get lots of rest (sleep is very good for you)
- have fun (laughing is good for you, too!)



Can I catch cancer from someone? Like catching a cold?

NO!
Go ahead and hug people with cancer.
Lots.

Can I cause someone to get cancer?

NO!
Nothing you could do would cause someone to get cancer.

If someone in my family has cancer, will I have cancer too?

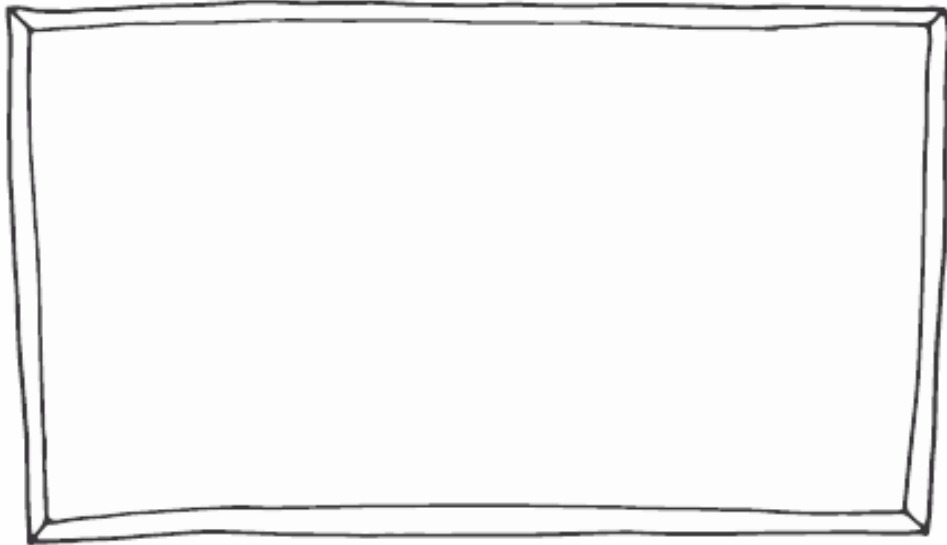
PROBABLY NOT. There are a few types of cancer that run in the family, but most do not. The chance of you getting cancer too is very small. And if you take care of your health, the chance of you getting cancer is even smaller.



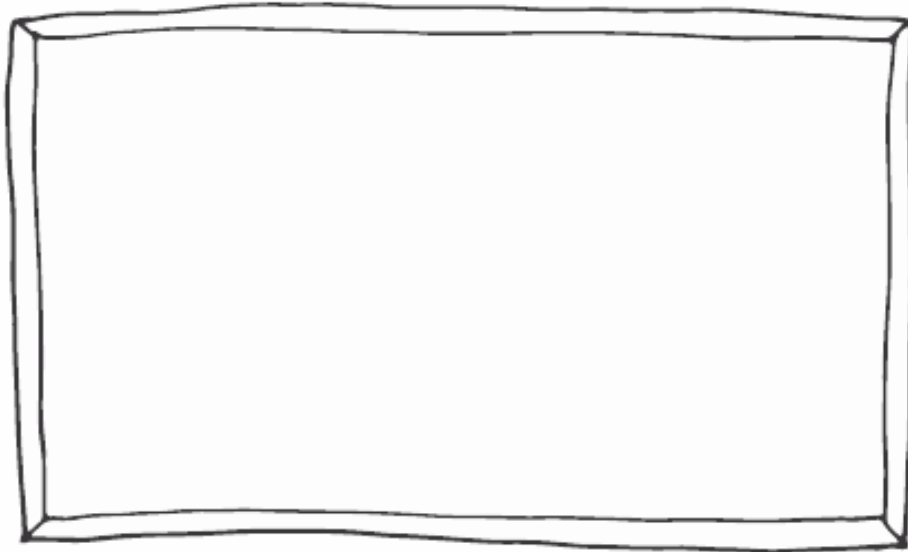


what season would you be in?

Cancer changes things.
What did your family look like before?
What does it look like now?



BEFORE.



NOW.

OR



Our nest is more messy now.

This is Worm. He is very good at expressing his feelings. Can you guess how he is feeling here?



Sometimes feelings are A LOT like weather - changing all the time.

What would your weather be today?



When you are sad or worried, it is good to do things that make you relax.
What makes you relax?

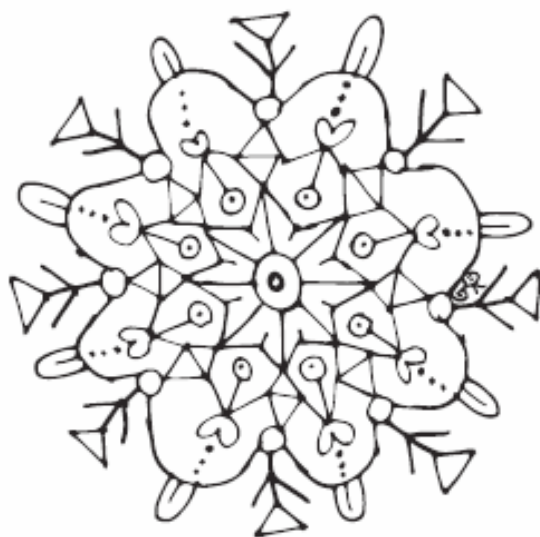
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If you feel really sad or worried, it is always good to talk to someone about this. Family members, friends, counsellors and teachers are all good people to talk to. WHO can you talk to?



Sometimes people find drawing really relaxing. Try making your own art, or adding to and coloring in this drawing. (It is called a mandala.)



Make a lucky charm!

Find a rock (or something else) and write a wish on it. Oil pastels, markers or paints will work for this. Now, keep it in your pocket (or somewhere else) for good luck. You may want to make one for your family and friends, too.



MESSAGE in a BOTTLE.

You have been through A LOT. What do you want to share with other people about your experience? Write down a message to go in this bottle.



