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Wish Fulfillment Organizations for People With Cancer [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the Cancer.Net Editorial Board [2], 06/2014

Wish fulfillment organizations offer children and adults with a chronic or advanced condition, such as cancer, the chance to take a break by allowing them to have their wishes and dreams come true. Such dreams ? big or small ? may include taking a family vacation, attending an event, purchasing a desired item, or meeting someone special. Whatever the dream, wish fulfillment organizations aim to help people with advanced illness enrich the quality of their lives and create meaningful memories.

Each organization has different requirements and limitations regarding the types of wishes they grant. You can find out specific details by looking at each website and contacting the organization directly. Often, they require a referral by a member of your health care team, family member, or the patient. Age and diagnosis are other requirements that differ with each organization.

If you or a child has a wish they would like granted, consider contacting one of the following organizations. The links below will take you outside of Cancer.Net.

Wish fulfillment organizations for children

Believe in Tomorrow Children's Foundation [3]**.** Best known for offering parents temporary housing near the hospitals where their children are receiving treatment, this foundation also provides funding for various adventures for children with advanced diseases.

Children's Wish Foundation International [4]**.** This Atlanta-based nonprofit grants wishes to children with advanced illness, including advanced cancer. Children under the age of three can participate in the organization's Young Minds program, which provides children younger than three years old with an assortment of gifts to entertain and provide comfort.

The Clayton Dabney Foundation for Kids with Cancer [5]**.** Through the Medicine of the Heart program, this foundation anonymously grants wishes to children with advanced cancer who come from families who have a significant financial need. A health care team member, such as a doctor or nurse, must nominate the child.

The Dream Factory [6]**.** The Dream Factory grants wishes to critically and chronically ill children

between three and 18 years old. Parents, guardians, physicians, other caregivers, and children with advanced diseases can make referrals to begin the wish-granting process.

Give Kids the World [7]**.** The Give Kids the World Village is a 70-acre resort in Central Florida that offers accommodation, entertainment, and other attractions for children with life-threatening illnesses. The charity provides children between the ages of three and 18 and their families free vacations to help create long-lasting memories. A child must be sponsored by one of more than 250 wish-granting organizations in the country or a children's hospital affiliated with Give Kids the World.

Granted Wish Foundation [8]. The Granted Wish Foundation fulfills wishes for physically challenged children and young adults under the age of 25. Wishes are limited to one per family and for those who have not received a wish by another organization.

Hope Kids [9]**.** This charity hosts regular events and activities that help restore hope for the future. Hope Kids also provides a support community for children with advanced illnesses and their families.

Jason's Dream for Kids [10]. Jason's Dreams for Kids grants wishes to children diagnosed with advanced disease living in New Jersey. The organization relies on medical professionals and parents for referrals and determines medical eligibility by speaking with the health care team.

Kids Wish Network. [11] The Kids Wish Network grants wishes for children who are between the ages of three and 18 and suffer from a life-threatening illness. Anyone can refer a child, including a family member, friend, nurse, doctor, or social worker. In addition, the organization's "Hero of the Month" program was developed to honor children who may not have a life-threatening condition but who bravely faced some very tough and often tragic situations. These special wishes are called "Hero Wishes" and are granted for children between the ages of three and 18 who have overcome life-altering circumstances and have stayed in or been treated at one of our Hero pediatric care facilities.

Make-a-Wish Foundation [12]**.** Make-a-Wish grants wishes to children between two and a half and 18 years old with life-threatening medical conditions. The organization accepts referrals from health care professionals and parents, and children can even nominate themselves.

The Marty Lyons Foundation. [13] Founded by professional football player Marty Lyons after serving as a surrogate father of a three-year-old boy with a life-threatening illness, the foundation helps grant wishes for children with advanced illnesses. This organization offers wishes to children from the ages of three to 17.

Operation Liftoff [14]**.** Operation Liftoff provides children with advanced illness three types of trips: trips for children with advanced illness, trips for medical treatment in other regions, and group trips to help teenagers with advanced illnesses leave the hospital and bond with peers. Parents and caregivers complete a form to request a trip.

The Rainbow Connection [15]**.** This organization helps grant wishes to children from Michigan facing an advanced illness. To qualify, children must be between two and a half and 18 years old, live in Michigan, be diagnosed with an advanced illness, and have the diagnosis verified by a

physician. In addition, they must not have received a wish fulfillment from any other organization. Medical professionals, parents or guardians, and children may submit wish requests.

A Special Wish Foundation [16]**.** This foundation grants wishes for infants, children, and young adults younger than 21 years old who have been diagnosed with an advanced illness. Wishes fall into three categories, including a special gift, a visit to a special place, or the opportunity to meet a special hero.

Sunshine Foundation [17]**.** This foundation is committed to fulfilling the dreams of children three to 18 years old who have advanced cancer or special needs and those who have faced abuse.

Wishing Star [18]**.** This charity grants wishes to children with advanced illnesses who are between three and 21 years old and live in Eastern and Central Washington and Idaho. This organization focuses on providing positive and uplifting experiences for children with life-threatening or life-shortening illnesses.

Wishing Well Foundation USA [19]**.** This New Orleans-based organization is committed to granting wishes for children with advanced illness. Children younger than 18 years old are eligible to apply.

Wish fulfillment organizations for adults and families

Compassion Partners. This Disney program [20] provides children and their families free passes to Disney theme parks. Passes are available by calling 407-396-5320.

Deliver the Dream [21]. This organization provides families living with an advanced illness, whether the illness involves a child or a parent, the chance to enjoy a three-day retreat. Health care providers or one of Deliver the Dream's partnering organizations are responsible for referring families to the program.

Dream Foundation [22]**.** The Dream Foundation fulfills the wishes of adults suffering from advanced illnesses. The foundation helps adults find peace and closure with the realization of a final wish. Dream Foundation grants requests to adults older than 18 years old whose life expectancy, confirmed by their physicians, is one year or less. They must also confirm that they have limited resources.

Memories of Love [23]**.** This organization provides parents living with a life-threatening illness, whose children are under the age of 16, the chance to form long-lasting memories with their entire family. Families are sent on a five-day, all-expense-paid vacation to Orlando, Florida. A physician, health care provider, or care organization must identify and nominate a parent who has an advanced illness.

Reeling and Healing Midwest [24]**.** Reeling and Healing Midwest offers fly-fishing wellness retreats for men and women with cancer. The organization helps renew participants' spirits and hopes through fly-fishing, nature, peer coaching, and peer bonding. Patients older than 18 are eligible to apply and are responsible for paying a registration fee and a daily fee.

Second Wind Dreams [25]**.** This fulfillment organization works to enhance the life of those living

in elder care communities in the United States and Canada. By granting wishes to those living in nursing, assisted living, and hospice facilities, this organization desires to change the perception of aging.

United Special Sportsman Alliance [26]**.** This wish-granting organization specializes in providing children with disabilities or advanced illness and disabled veterans an outdoor adventure of their dreams. Trips include hunting, fishing, water sports, and other activities.

More Information

Completing Your Life [27]

Caring for a Terminally Ill Child: A Guide for Parents [28]

Camps and Retreats for Families and Children Affected by Cancer [29]

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/coping-and-emotions/managing-emotions/finding-support-and-information/wish-fulfillment-organizations-people-cancer
[2] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
[3] http://www.believeintomorrow.org/index.html
[4] http://childrenswish.org/
[5] http://claytondabney.org/
[6] http://dreamfactoryinc.org/
[7] http://www.gktw.org/
[8] https://www.grantedwish.org/
[9] http://www.hopekids.org/
[10] http://www.jasonsdreamsforkids.com/
[11] http://kidswishnetwork.org/programs/wish-granting/
[12] http://wish.org/
[13] http://www.martylyonsfoundation.org/
[14] http://www.operationliftoff.com/
[15] http://www.rainbowconnection.org/
[16] http://www.spwish.org/
[17] http://www.sunshinefoundation.org/
[18] http://wishingstar.org/
[19] http://www.wishingwellusa.org/home0.aspx
[20] http://wdwnews.com/releases/2011/08/01/disneys-wish-granting-program/
[21] http://www.deliverthedream.org/
[22] http://www.dreamfoundation.org/
[23] http://www.memoriesoflove.org/
[24] http://www.reelingandhealingmidwest.org/
[25] http://www.secondwind.org/
[26] http://www.childswish.com/
[27] http://www.cancer.net/node/25283
[28] http://www.cancer.net/node/25280
[29] http://www.cancer.net/node/25118