
Being a Mum When Cancer Threatens Your Child's Life

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By: Warren Nunn

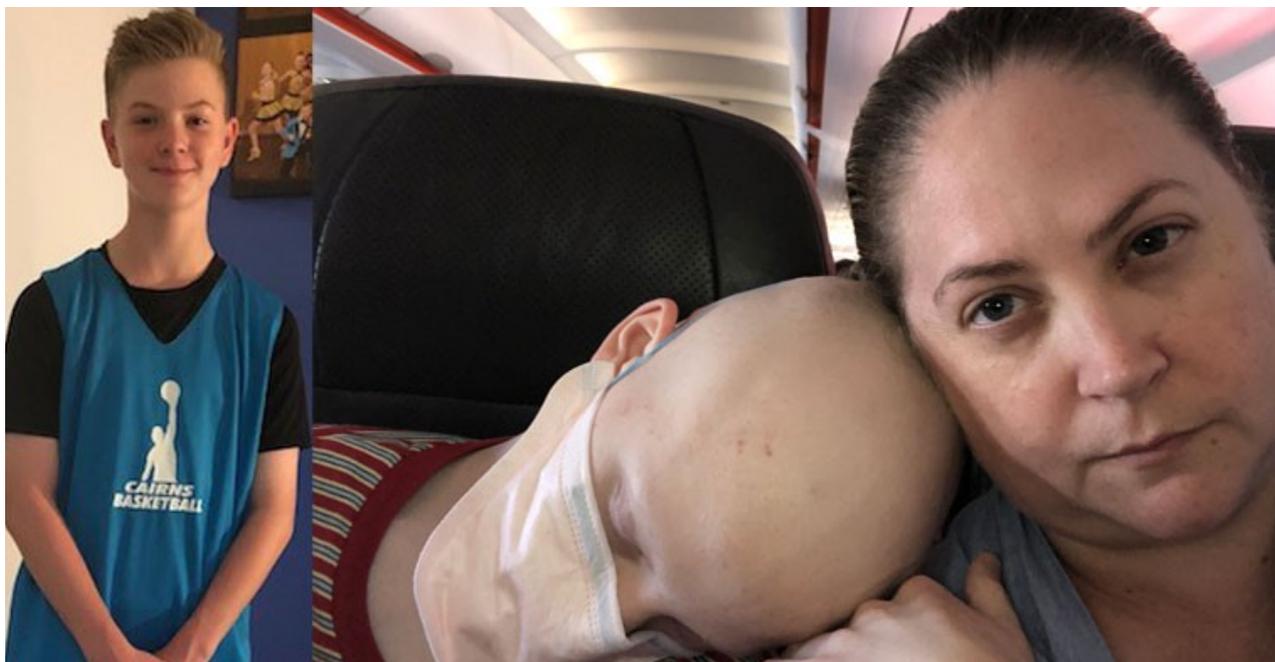
When your child faces life-threatening cancer, how do you cope when treatment means you are hundreds of kilometres from home?

That's a real scenario for hundreds of Queensland families every year. When Cairns couple Rick and Stacey Steer's teenage son Hudson was diagnosed with a rare cancer, life changed drastically.

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Mum Stacey had to fly to Brisbane with Hudson for chemotherapy while father Rick and their other son Campbell stayed in Cairns. It's about 1700 kilometres between cities, so commuting wasn't an option.

Safe haven for families



Hudson before he fell ill and with his mum after chemotherapy.

Thrust into an extraordinarily stressful situation, the Steer family found what Stacey says is a safe haven and a sense of normality that was provided by Australia's oldest children's cancer charity, Childhood Cancer Support.

Because Hudson faced 40 weeks of treatment, he needed to stay near Queensland Children's Hospital in accommodation that the charity provided.

With mum Stacey constantly at his side, they are well into a journey they could not have imagined before Hudson was diagnosed with Embryonal Rhabdomyosarcoma.

For Stacey, Childhood Cancer Support has made a significant contribution to helping not just Hudson, but all the family. "They provide more than just a home away from home for families that are dealing with the trauma of their child's cancer diagnosis and treatment," she said.

In the lead up to Mothers' Day, 96five has been encouraging listeners to support the vital work of this non-profit charity.

Family time crucial part of treatment



Hudson with his brother Campbell.

Having space to be a family is a crucial part of the support that Stacey gets. "Since Hudson's diagnosis he and I have not been apart for more than a few days. You are together nearly 24 hours a day. You sometimes shed silent tears and then pull yourself together and get on with the daily realities because falling apart is not an option," she said.

She says that without Childhood Cancer Support, she could not imagine how she might have coped. "We would have struggled emotionally and financially to support Hudson in the fight for his life."

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If you want to show Hudson your support, send him a hug at sendmyhugs.co.uk.



Hudson with his dad Rick.

Childhood Cancer Support background

- Childhood Cancer Support has 17 fully furnished family units (1, 2 or 3 bedroom) at Herston and South Brisbane.
- It supports regional families from throughout Queensland, northern New South Wales, the Northern Territory and from the Pacific Islands.
- In 2018, it transported 2,079 passengers to and from hospital and airport pickups.
- It provided 44 families a place to call home during treatment.
- Accommodated 659 people.
- It is a not-for-profit charity that survives because of generous individuals.
- You can add your support by visiting [their website](#).

About the author: Warren Nunn has been a journalist for more than 40 years. For 27 years until 2013, he worked at Queensland's main daily newspaper *The Courier-Mail*.

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