



# Childhood Cancer Survivorship

Cure is not the end of the story

## Survivorship Stats Today

Survival rates have improved, but for many children, cancer is followed by a lifetime of health challenges. Survival alone is not enough. Health systems must ensure that every child has the chance to live a healthy life.

**>85%** of children diagnosed with cancer today in high-income countries (HICs) will achieve five-year survival

**~500k** childhood cancer survivors are alive in the U.S. today

Global survival is a priority

**~20%** in 2015

with a goal to reach

**60%** by 2030

## What Childhood Cancer Survivors Face

**99.9%** will develop **at least one chronic health condition** by age 50

**96%** will face a condition that is **severe, disabling, or life-threatening**

**4x** higher risk of cardiovascular disease death vs. the general population

- 30% less likely to complete higher education (college or beyond)
- Nearly 3x more likely to experience health-related unemployment
- Approximately 30% less likely to be married
- 40% lower likelihood of having children

**2-6x** more likely to develop a subsequent cancer

# A Global Gap in Survivorship Evidence & Longterm Care

## THE GLOBAL EQUITY GAP

**~400k** children develop cancer each year

**90%** in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC)

**Yet 95% of survivorship research comes from HICs**

1,478 studies from HICs vs. only 80 from LMICs

## THE OPPORTUNITY

Studies in high-income settings suggest that modifiable lifestyle factors (tobacco, alcohol, physical activity, weight) are associated with long-term outcomes.

### Healthy lifestyle:

**fewer than 100 excess deaths** per 10,000 person-years at 40 years post-diagnosis

**VS.**

### Unhealthy lifestyle:

**nearly 200 excess deaths** per 10,000 person-years – almost double

**Prevention + lifelong care = improved survival and quality of life**

## Call to Action

### We must move beyond survival as the only measure of success.

Every child who survives cancer deserves a chance at a healthy life, not just a longer one.



Childhood cancer survivorship is a **lifelong NCD challenge** that health systems are currently not designed to manage



Inequities in survival now risk becoming **inequities in lifelong health**



Global commitments require moving from **cure to continuity of care**



Survivorship must be **embedded** into **NCD, PHC, and UHC frameworks** - not left to specialized centres



**Provider capacity** and **system integration** are the missing links



Survivorship care is **cost-effective prevention** - not an added burden



**Empowered survivors** improve outcomes and system performance



Survivorship is a rights-based, life-course **responsibility** of health systems

### Sources:

Bhakta N, Liu Q, Ness KK, et al. The cumulative burden of surviving childhood cancer: an initial report from the St Jude Lifetime Cohort Study (SJLIFE). *Lancet*. 2017;390(10112):2569–2582. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(17\)31610-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)31610-0)

American Association for Cancer Research. (2025). AACR Pediatric Cancer Progress Report 2025. <https://cancerprogressreport.aacr.org/pediatric/>