

# HOW TO *help*

When a child is diagnosed with brain cancer, it's hard to know what to say or do. This guide from the Robert Connor Dawes Foundation helps you show up gently, practically, and with heart.

## START WITH COMPASSION

Say something, even if you're unsure what to say. Silence can feel like distance.

- Try: "Thinking of you. What would help this week- meals, school runs, or house stuff?"
- Don't expect a reply. Your consistency matters most.
- Skip miracle cures and medical advice; listen first.
- Keep checking in, even months later.

## WORDS THAT HELP

- "I'm here. No need to reply."
- "Would Tuesday dinner or Friday school run help more?"
- "You're doing an incredible job."
- Avoid: 'At least...' statements, comparisons or medical advice.

## HOUSEHOLD HELP

Families may feel overwhelmed by daily life.

Offer something specific.

- Laundry, bins, vacuuming, quick garden tidy.
- Coordinate a cleaning roster or service.
- Help with paperwork, Centrelink, NDIS, medical forms, school notes.

## TRANSPORT & TIME OUT

- Offer to drive, share parking passes, or gift a ride share voucher.
- Give carers a few hours off, time to nap, shower, or simply rest.
- Plan a calm outing. A walk, coffee, or moment by the water or a peaceful park.

## MEAL SUPPORT

- Freezer-friendly, kid-approved meals are gold.
- Gift cards for supermarkets or meal delivery make life easier.
- Label allergens and dates; use containers you don't need back.
- Quiet doorstep deliveries may be best, text before dropping off.

## SUPPORTING SIBLINGS

Brothers and sisters need care and normalcy, too.

- Offer school pick-ups, sport lifts, or playdates.
- Take them for something fun, just for them.
- Loop in their school's wellbeing team for gentle check-ins.



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## PETS & ERRANDS

- Walk the dog, drop off pet food, or help with vet appointments.
- Run small errands: groceries, uniforms, school supplies.
- Keep things practical and predictable.

## THOUGHTFUL GESTURES

- Celebrate small wins, scan days and treatment milestones.
- Create a care pack or share a comforting playlist.
- Set up a shared calendar or private group chat to coordinate help.

## BOUNDARIES & PRIVACY

- Always ask before visiting- hospitals and homes can be unpredictable.
- Don't share updates without permission.
- Respect 'not today.' Sometimes space is the kindest support.

## IF YOUR FAMILY IS IMPACTED

You don't have to go through this alone.

- The Robert Connor Dawes Foundation is here to help, connecting families with Music Therapy Grants, and peer networks through our Brain Star program.

This guide was created by the Robert Connor Dawes Foundation for our big-hearted community. For more information contact us:

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