



The Tyler Robinson Foundation: Providing Financial and Emotional Support for Pediatric Cancer Families

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Abstract:

Statement of the Problem: Families of children who are diagnosed with pediatric cancer are at a high risk of financial toxicity, which also causes an increase in emotional distress. Families must manage childcare, travel, and food during and after their children's treatments. The stresses of these factors on top of the tragedy of dealing with a pediatric cancer diagnosis can be devastating to the financial and emotional well-being of a family. These families require financial and emotional support during and after a child's treatment to attempt to reduce these stresses. Researchers have reported that 1/5 of cancer patients' families reported losing more than 40% of their annual income due to work disruptions. Financial and emotional resources for families dealing with pediatric cancer beyond research are not as common as is required considering the need that exists. **Methodology & Theoretical Orientation:** The mission of The Tyler Robinson Foundation is to strengthen families financially and emotionally as they cope with the tragedy of a pediatric cancer diagnosis by offsetting out-of-pocket life expenses. We have provided financial resources in the form of grants and other programs to more than 1,500 families across the world, concentrating on the United States and Canada, since our founding in 2013. Interaction between staff and families also provide much needed emotional support. Our families have let us know that the financial relief that they receive have had positive effect on their families and the amount of focus that they can place on their children. **Conclusion and Significance:** The Tyler Robinson Foundation has assisted families for 7 years to focus on the care of their children during pediatric cancer treatment while reducing financial stresses, which in turn provides some relief for their emotional distress. We intend to continue in our mission and expand beyond our current reach.

Biography:

Kim Gradisher serves as executive director for the Tyler Robinson Foundation (TRF), the nonprofit organization of the GRAMMY Award-winning band Imagine Dragons, which is dedicated to strengthening families financially and emotionally as they cope with the tragedy of a pediatric cancer diagnosis by providing grants to offset out-of-pocket life expenses. In this capacity, Gradisher is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the foundation and its strategic operations. She works closely



with TRF's Board of Directors to meet goals and ensure that programming and staff members are aligned with the TRF mission and vision. Gradisher directs all strategic and operational planning, program operations and project management, community outreach, donor development, fundraising campaigns, marketing initiatives and staff. She boasts more than a decade of experience in the non-profit sector, developing and executing key programs in positions supporting the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation, Special Olympics Northern California and Nevada and the Arthritis Foundation. Gradisher holds a bachelor of science degree in recreational management from the University of Nevada Las Vegas and a certificate from Cornell University in women in leadership.

Publication of speakers:

1. Dussel, V., Bona, K., Heath, J. A., Hilden, J. M., Weeks, J. C., & Wolfe, J. (2011). Unmeasured costs of a child's death: perceived financial burden, work disruptions, and economic coping strategies used by American and Australian families who lost children to cancer. *Journal of clinical oncology : official journal of the American Society of Clinical Oncology*, 29(8), 1007-1013.
2. Fenn, K. M., Evans, S. B., McCorkle, R., DiGiovanna, M. P., Puzstai, L., Sanft, T., Hofstatter, E. W., Killelea, B. K., Knobf, M. T., Lannin, D. R., Abu-Khalaf, M., Horowitz, N. R., & Chagpar, A. B. (2014). Impact of financial burden of cancer on survivors' quality of life. *Journal of oncology practice*, 10(5), 332-338.

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