



Receiving a cancer diagnosis is devastating news for any patient and family, but it is particularly heartbreaking when the cancer patient is a child. One's entire life is turned upside down. Medical treatments may be long and difficult. These children and their families require a great deal of support to help them through this difficult time.

The P.U.N.T. Foundation has been an incredible resource for our pediatric patients and their families. Families of newly diagnosed patients receive a hospitality bag during their first visit at the hospital, immediately letting them know that they are not alone on this journey. Additional assistance may include hospital parking and cafeteria vouchers as well as gas and grocery cards. These families are often financially stressed; facing missed work time, babysitting needs for their other children, medical co-pays, and other expenses. P.U.N.T.'s *Helping Hands* Program provides financial assistance for both daily needs and to help meet emergency needs that may arise, including rent assistance, home disinfection, etc. The *Adopt a Family* program allows needy families to have Christmas celebration with their kids.

In addition to providing financial assistance to those in need, the P.U.N.T. Foundation has afforded social opportunities that make our patients feel special and valued. Many of our patients are unable to participate in their usual social activities with their friends, which is a critical part of childhood and adolescence. They provide tickets to attend Buffalo Bills home games in a suite, so there is less risk of exposure to infection, and also support programs that grant special wishes to children who are going through a particularly rough period. Through these programs, P.U.N.T. helps to create a sense of normalcy as these families experience such an incredible disruption in their lives. These are the kinds of experiences that create memories for a lifetime.

The P.U.N.T. Foundation's Remembrance Weekend has become an annual event for families and staff. It provides a getaway for families who have lost children to cancer, where they can share stories of their loved ones, network with others who truly understand what they are going through, and receive guidance and support from psychologists, social workers and other trained staff. This has been a tremendous source of comfort for these families.

Many of our patients experience frequent and sometimes prolonged hospitalizations. The Foundation provides a monthly dinner on the inpatient unit for both families and staff, allowing for real "family together" time, which can otherwise be lost due to all the medical and financial demands placed on a household when a child is seriously ill.

I have seen the P.U.N.T. Foundation make a real difference in the lives of so many of our kids and families, by helping to make an incredibly difficult situation a little bit easier. The families have been effusive in expressing their appreciation for the support they have received. We can't thank them enough for all they do.

Martin Brecher, MD

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Martin Brecher'.

Chair Emeritus
Pediatric Hematology/Oncology