

# BELLA MAGAZINE



SUMMER 2023 | ISSUE 05

SHINE YOUR LIGHT

[WWW.BELLASTERI.COM](http://WWW.BELLASTERI.COM)

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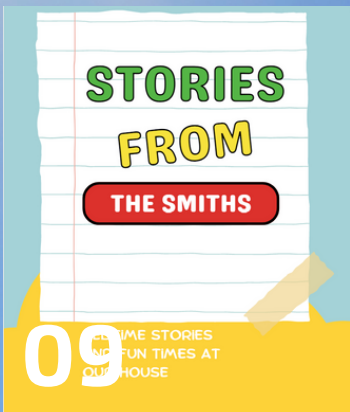
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## CASH'S CORNER

Summer is a great time for families to get back to some old-fashioned storytelling. Check out Cash's Corner for fresh ideas from Bell Asteri for creating memories by sharing stories as a family.



## HEALTHY FUN RECIPES FOR SUMMER

looking for some easy, tasty and healthy foods to make for the summer? Good nutrition doesn't have to mean bad taste. Try these and even get your kids to help make them. Cooking can be fun for the whole family!



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# EDITOR'S DESK

by Julie Frampton



May is known for its gentle breeze, warmth from the sunshine, summer nipping at its heels, and blooming flowers from April's showers. However, in Cancer-land, May is also known as **Skin Cancer Awareness Month**. There are even days such as “**Melanoma Monday**”, which is the first Monday in May, and “**Don’t Fry Day**”. The purpose of Skin Cancer Awareness Month is to do just that, bring awareness to the dangers of tanning and unprotected sun exposure. For me, May is also the month I learned what melanoma was all about.

In May of 2012, I was a young 34-year-old mother of two children, ages 12 and three at the time, who had just been diagnosed with NEVOID MALIGNANT MELANOMA.

This particular type of melanoma (there are several subtypes) accounts for less than 1% of all melanoma diagnoses, making it incredibly rare. I was a patient at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas, and remained NED (No Evidence of Disease) until the Spring of 2014 when I was diagnosed with a superficial spreading Melanoma in-situ (also known as Stage 0, the earliest and most contained stage that can be treated with excision). So, within two years, I had two separate primary melanoma tumors and diagnoses. My entire life changed in the blink of an eye. I was given a second chance at life, and I don’t intend to waste it. If I can save just one person from the heartache I’ve had to face, then it was all worth it.

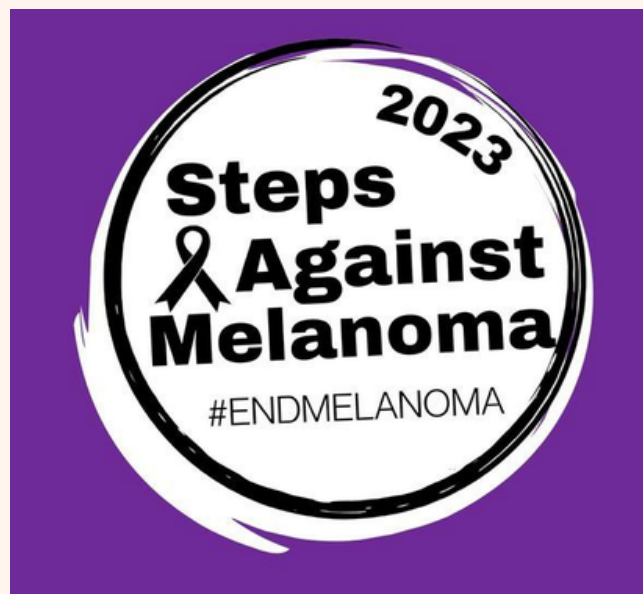
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In the last 10 years of diagnosis, I have stayed on top of any new tumor development by having 90 skin checks, lab work, and imaging done. I have had 32 biopsies done, all of which except for two, have come back with cell changes that we caught before they could finish evolving into skin cancer. Early detection is key! Over the last decade of what I call my second chance at life, I have advocated tirelessly for all things melanoma, including a recent trip to Washington D.C. to speak with our Senators on federal funding for melanoma programs, access to clinical trials, and diversity and inclusion to those clinical trials, to name just a few. I'd like to leave you with some common myths that surround melanoma that I have come across during my 10-year fight, what you can look for, and where you can find more information for any questions you may have.

*continue reading on page 5*

*Julie*

**BELL ASTERI EDITOR**



**TO KNOW MORE ABOUT  
HOW YOU CAN RAISE FUNDS TO  
DEVELOP BETTER THERAPIES FOR  
MELANOMA PATIENTS, VISIT  
[WWW.AIMATMELANOMA.ORG](http://WWW.AIMATMELANOMA.ORG)**

# MYTHS & FACTS

## MYTHS OF MELANOMA

by Julie Frampton

- Melanoma is an older person's disease. **FALSE.** According to the Skin Cancer Foundation, melanoma is the second most common type of cancer diagnosed in 15-to-19-year-olds, and the most common form of cancer affecting young adults between the ages of 25 and 29.
- It's "just skin cancer," so you can just cut it out. **FALSE.** Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancers. Whereas thin melanomas may be excised completely, MOST melanomas are already too deep to just cut out by the time they are caught. They grow deep, not wide and once they have spread past the upper most layers of the skin, other therapies are part of the plan.
- Kids can't get melanoma. **FALSE.** According to *Aim at Melanoma*, roughly 400 cases of Pediatric Melanoma are diagnosed every year. Melanoma tends to present differently in children than in young adults or adults. Often it presents as a "bug bite" or a bump that doesn't heal or go away. It will also present as spitzoid type. **Currently there are no FDA approved treatments for Pediatric Melanoma.** Our youngest warriors are given adult treatments and THAT HAS TO CHANGE. Melanoma can also pass the blood/placenta barrier and an unborn child can be born with advanced stage melanoma. It is very rare, but I personally know of two cases. It does happen.
- Only Caucasian people can get melanoma. **FALSE.** Many people of color often present with Acral Melanoma. Per the *Melanoma Research Foundation*, "People of Color are diagnosed with melanoma less often, but they are up to four times more likely to be diagnosed with advanced melanoma and 1.5 times more likely to die from the disease". That is because they often do not know what to look for, so by the time they seek medical intervention, it is in an advanced stage. Acral Melanoma is often found on the palms, nails, and soles of the feet. It will look like a black line starting from the nail bed and going the length of the nail.

# MYTHS & FACTS

Continued from page 5,

## MYTHS OF MELANOMA

- Melanoma can only result from sun exposure. **FALSE**. Some melanomas can have a genetic component. Tanning beds are also a component of developing melanoma.
- Melanoma can only present on sun or UVA/UVB ray (tanning beds) exposed skin. **FALSE**. The **ONLY** places where you cannot get melanoma are your teeth and hair. Think of your skin as one big sheet of paper. You may have gotten a burn on your face, but it can show up years later in areas that have never seen the sun.
- There are several types of Melanomas: Nodular, Superficial Spreading, Acral, Mucosal, Ocular, and Lentigo Maligna are among the primary types.

There are many misconceptions surrounding melanoma, often leading to advanced stage diagnoses. Below are links to resources where you can learn more. Also, remember to always wear your sunscreen (even on cloudy days), wear polarized sunglasses, and UPF clothing. How much sunscreen and what kind should you wear? Find the links below.

Get to know the ABCDE's of Melanoma: Asymmetry, Border, Color, Diameter, and Evolution. This will help with early detection, which could save your life. Follow below for more information.

### Resources/Citations:

[www.aimatmelanoma.org](http://www.aimatmelanoma.org)  
[www.curemelanoma.org](http://www.curemelanoma.org)  
[www.aad.org](http://www.aad.org)  
[www.mskcc.org](http://www.mskcc.org)  
[www.hopkinsmedicine.org](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org)



# RARE CHILDHOOD & ADOLESCENT CANCERS



According to the National Cancer Institute, a rare cancer is one that affects fewer than 40,000 people in the United States annually. That means that the government considers all childhood cancers rare. It considers all adolescent cancers rare. It even considers cancer for people in their 20s and 30s rare. So what is the problem with having a "rare" disease? Why does this term make the Childhood

and Adolescent/Young Adult cancer communities so upset?

The biggest reason and concern is that it can hurt the chances of finding new treatments specific to these age groups. Cancers in older adults are common and the funding for research for these diseases has meant better therapies and better outcomes for patients in the over 40 crowd.

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No matter how "rare" a deadly disease is, no child should endure it. No parent should be forced to watch their baby suffering through chemotherapy and radiation therapy with the possibility of death looming.

Raising awareness and funding are our main goals at Bell Asteri. Our hope is that the day will come when no child is diagnosed with these diseases, but until that day arrives, we strive to fund research so that the therapies they endure don't end up killing them or harming them, but instead, save them and give them a good quality of life.

We are grateful that the "less than 4%" fact has changed and now 8% of federal cancer funds are allocated to pediatric cancer. However, depending solely on the government to end this crisis is futile. The answer to childhood and young adult cancers lies in philanthropy,

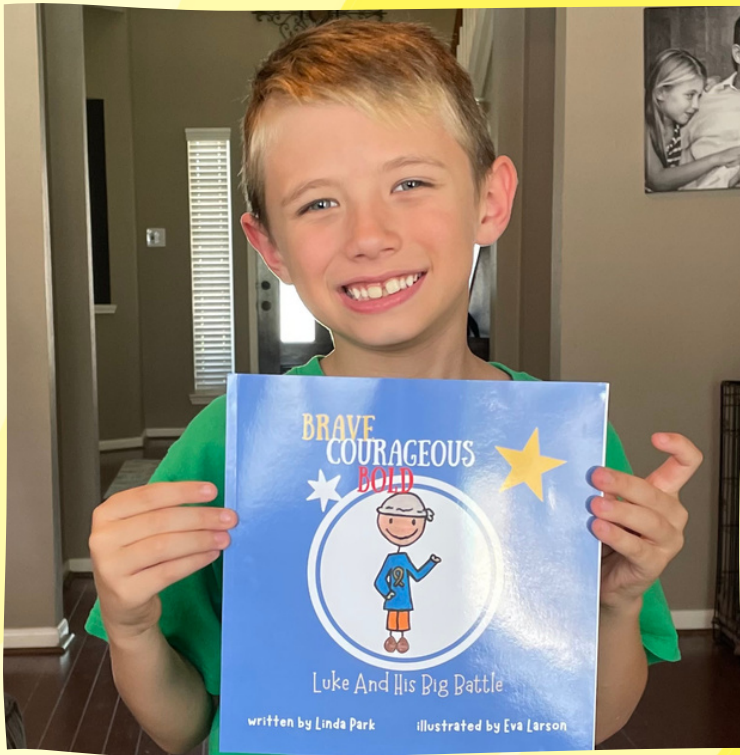
Today, please consider joining forces with some of the organizations working to fund research. For a list of some of these, visit [www.bellasteri.com/resources](http://www.bellasteri.com/resources).

DID YOU KNOW THAT CHILDREN AND TEENS CAN DEVELOP CANCER JUST ABOUT ANYWHERE? WHEN A CHILD GETS CANCER, THEY SHOULD NOT HAVE TO TAKE TREATMENTS MADE FOR ADULTS. HERE ARE JUST SOME OF THE "RARE" CANCERS IN KIDS:

- Nasopharyngeal Cancer
- Esthesioneuroblastoma
- Thyroid Cancer
- Oral Cavity Cancer
- Salivary Gland Tumors
- Laryngeal Cancer and Papillomatosis
- Midline Tract Cancer with *NUT* Gene Changes (*NUT* Midline Carcinoma)
- Breast Cancer
- Lung Cancer
- Esophageal Cancer
- Thymoma and Thymic Carcinoma
- Cardiac (Heart) Tumors
- Stomach Cancer
- Pancreatic Cancer
- Colorectal Cancer
- Gastrointestinal Carcinoid Tumors
- Bladder Cancer
- Testicular Cancer
- Ovarian Cancer
- Cervical and Vaginal Cancer
- Melanoma

\*VISIT [CANCER.GOV](http://CANCER.GOV) FOR A FULL LIST AND WHEN YOU THINK OF CHILDREN, REMEMBER, THEY DESERVE A CHANCE TO LIVE AND BE HEALTHY!





# CASH'S CORNER

*Activities for Kids and the Whole Family!*

Our buddy Cash Allen (photo above) inspired this column. Each Bella Magazine features activities for kids and their parents. For this edition, we want to encourage families to tell stories together and to write those stories down. Illustrate your stories. Share them with your friends and family members when they come over for a visit.

Storytelling is one of the oldest and most fun art forms and activities for families to share. Long before we had television and the internet and apps to occupy our time, families read books together and told stories.

Now that school is about to be out for the summer, all of us at Bell Asteri want to remind you to read and to write and to get creative. Make your own children's book and illustrate it. Make a family storybook collection of stories you can read at bedtime and save those stories to share for generations to come.

If you would like to have your book printed in either paperback or hardcover, visit [www.bellasteri.com/custom-books](http://www.bellasteri.com/custom-books). We can help you design a cover and do the layout for your very own storybook you can keep forever.



# NEW AND UPCOMING

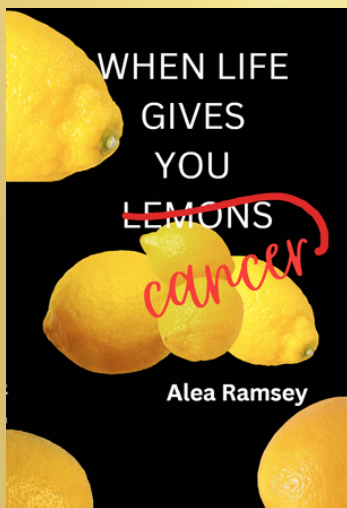


Author Linda Park shares the story of her 18-month-old baby Luke and his brave, courageous and bold fight against pediatric cancer. Illustrated by 13-year-old Eva Larson, this story will be officially released on May 26, but you can buy an advanced copy at [www.bellasteri.com/bookstore](http://www.bellasteri.com/bookstore) today.

\*Proceeds benefit Gold Together for Childhood Cancer at the American Cancer Society and the Histiocytosis Association.



Authors Laura Davis and her son Cole Davis share the story of a leukemia journey from both the perspective of Mom and Son. Cole was diagnosed with leukemia at the age of 14 and was forced to endure treatments for the next three years. He and his mom boldly share their journey in this unique book that helps the reader understand why a diagnosis with cancer for teenagers is different than any other age group and we must pay attention. The book will be released later this summer.



Author Alea Ramsey is a 7-time cancer survivor and she is only 17 years old. Diagnosed at the age of 13, Alea shares her story of survivorship and advocacy and encourages other patients to bravely fight against their illnesses and find a purpose. Her book will be released later this summer.

To see updates on other book releases, visit [www.bellasteri.com](http://www.bellasteri.com)

## Turkey Meatballs

### Ingredients:

- 1/4 head cauliflower, broken into florets
- 1/2 cup finely shredded cabbage
- 1 tablespoon potato starch or cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 pound ground turkey

### Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°. Place cauliflower in a food processor; pulse until finely chopped. Transfer to a large bowl. Add the cabbage, potato starch, vinegar, salt, basil and pepper.
2. Add turkey; mix lightly but thoroughly. With an ice cream scoop or with wet hands, shape into 1-1/2-in. balls. Place meatballs on a greased rack in a 15x10x1-in. baking pan. Bake 20-24 minutes or until cooked through. If desired, toss with barbecue sauce or marinara and top with basil.

\*Thank you to Taste of Home for this recipe!

## Toddler Smoothie

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup milk
- 1 banana (can be frozen)
- 1/2 cup of frozen strawberries
- 1/2 cup frozen spinach
- Chia seeds (optional)

### Instructions:

Blend above ingredients, pour and sip with straw!

# THE RECIPES



## Healthy Charcuterie Board

These are fun to make and fun to eat! And a great snack for the family while you share some great stories or read together. Grab a board and the whole family can put together a masterpiece with fruits, veggies, pretzels, cut up cheese and even some dips.

It is even more fun when you grab a cookie cutter and turn your cheese into a fun shape!

We want to bring you more delicious and nutritious recipes, so send us your family favorites to [info@bellasteri.com](mailto:info@bellasteri.com)

# MAY IS BRAIN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

There are many different types of brain cancers in children and adolescents. Thanks to research efforts, many kids survive brain cancer and go on to live healthy lives.

Sadly, brain cancer is now the leading cancer killer of children and two in particular are the most lethal of all childhood cancers: DMG and DIPG.

Diffuse midline gliomas (DMG) are primary central nervous system tumors. This means they begin in the brain or spinal cord. For children with DMG, the median survival post-diagnosis is less than 1 year. Approximately 10% of patients are still alive after 2 years. DMG has got to end.

Diffuse intrinsic pontine gliomas (DIPGs) are highly-aggressive and difficult-to-treat brain tumors found at the base of the brain. They are glial tumors, meaning they arise from the brain's glial tissue – tissue made up of cells that help support and protect the brain's neurons. Currently, 90% of kids diagnosed with DIPG die within 2 years. The overall survival rate is less than 1%. DIPG has got to end.

There are many types of brain cancer in children. Treatments are harsh. There are some therapies and treatments being developed and there is still hope. Please consider helping families fighting these cancers. Visit [www.bellasteri.com/resources](http://www.bellasteri.com/resources) to find out how.

## *The Optimistic Angel*



Hayley and Justin Dickens

Kallie Dickens was three years old when she was diagnosed with DMG. Only 11 months later, Kallie took her final breath at the age of four. She left behind a young mom and dad and precious younger sister who will never stop missing her. Hayley and Justin Dickens, Kallie's parents published a book about their journey with brain cancer. All of the proceeds from their book go into their organization Keeping A Light For Kallie (website on page 14). You can buy the book on their website or at [bellasteri.com/bookstore](http://bellasteri.com/bookstore). Please help them keep shedding Kallie's light on kids with brain cancer.



# SUMMER IS A GREAT TIME TO BUSY YOURSELF WITH FUNDRAISING - MAKE IT SPECIAL AND HELP INCREASE FUNDING FOR CHILDHOOD CANCER



Gold Together for Childhood Cancer is the American Cancer Society's childhood cancer initiative. They are currently funding 44 multi-year grants specifically for pediatric cancer. You can help raise funds through the Champions for Childhood Cancer fundraiser. Learn more at [www.cancer.org/involved/fundraise/gold-together](http://www.cancer.org/involved/fundraise/gold-together)



The mission at Chad Tough Defeat DIPG Foundation is to help patients and families by funding game-changing research and providing navigation throughout their journey. Find out more at [www.chadtough.org](http://www.chadtough.org)



The mission at Alex's Lemonade Stand is to change the lives of children with cancer through funding impactful research, raising awareness, supporting families and empowering everyone to help cure childhood cancer. Find out more at [www.alexslimonade.org](http://www.alexslimonade.org)



The Histiocytosis Association is a global nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the unique needs of patients and families dealing with the effects of histiocytic disorders, that connects patient and medical communities around the world with the resources needed along every step of the way, while leading the search for a cure. These very "rare" cancers in children need a cure. To find out how you can help visit [www.histio.org](http://www.histio.org)



AIM at Melanoma's goal is to end this disease in our lifetime while improving the lives of those it affects. Now is the perfect time to fundraise and help end skin cancer for kids and people of every age. Visit [www.aimatmelanoma.org](http://www.aimatmelanoma.org) to learn more.



Keeping A Light for Kallie is shedding some light on pediatric cancer and offering support to those enduring the unimaginable. Kallie Dickens was only four years old when she took her final breath thanks to brain cancer. Raising funds for this organization helps kids fight with the same optimistic attitude that Kallie had. We love Kallie's precious motto: "Happy! Smile! Hey!" Visit [www.keepingalight.org](http://www.keepingalight.org) to learn more.

*for more ideas, visit [www.bellasteri.com](http://www.bellasteri.com)*

have a safe  
and happy  
summer!

