We believe every child deserves the opportunity of a future; that’s why we work to give children with cancer the gift of growing up.

**Why Childhood Cancer?**

Every year, over 300,000 children will develop cancer with the majority of these living in developing countries.

Children with cancer in developed countries have an 80% chance of survival but for those in developing countries it’s as low as 10% with most of them never even receiving an accurate diagnosis.

**What do we do?**

- Enhance the skills of doctors and nurses and develop shared care networks to pull together healthcare centers in our programs to work together and bring trained doctors and nurses closer to the children we support
- Work to raise awareness of the early warning signs of childhood cancer to give children with cancer a faster route to better treatment
- Provide emotional and financial support to children with cancer and their families via our family support program
- Advocate for children with cancer on a global and national scale, aiming to increase understanding amongst policy makers on how and why they should invest in childhood cancer services

**Our mission is to improve diagnosis, treatment and support for children with cancer, and their families, in the developing world.**
Supporting families

We launched our new three-year program in Ghana to help support children with cancer and their families.

The new program aims to give children a faster route to better treatment and is funded by the UK government following our successful UK Aid Match appeal to ‘Stop the Childhood Cancer Clock’. We are working on improving cancer care in Ghana by:

- Raising awareness of childhood cancer through several in-country media campaigns and community-based awareness activities
- Training healthcare workers in the hospitals we support and in rural areas on spotting the early warning signs of childhood cancer to ensure more children receive faster referrals and an accurate diagnosis
- Reducing abandonment rates by supporting some of the poorest families by covering essential treatment and travel costs

Giving families emotional support

Childhood cancer impacts the entire family, from parents worrying about their child to siblings wondering why their brother or sister is being treated differently. World Child Cancer’s Psychosocial Support Advisor (above center) spent much of 2018 in Ghana, Malawi and Myanmar to understand how families and staff deal with the psychological aspects of childhood cancer.

Meet Nurse Pat

‘To do what we do often takes more than knowledge. It takes heart and patience. We need to be able to talk to parents as a mother or a father and not only as a nurse. By showing compassion, we can speak to them with an understanding that comforts them.’

Our achievements

We have now arranged for four newly qualified Clinical Psychologists from the Myanmar Clinical Psychology Consortium to provide voluntary support to families at Yangon Children’s Hospital. Furthermore, we delivered 21 training sessions to doctors and nurses in Malawi and provided one-to-one sessions to help healthcare professionals cope with their own stress and provide guidance on how to support families.
Meet Antonio

Antonio (left) first complained of a pain in his leg in January 2018. Despite his mother’s best efforts to find out what was wrong, local doctors simply sent them away. When Antonio’s condition continued to worsen, the family sought private help which resulted in him being unnecessarily operated on. It was only when he was transferred to Mexico’s Hospital de la Nizn Oaxaquena, which is supported by World Child Cancer, that he finally received an accurate diagnosis. Three long months after Antonio first became unwell, he finally received the treatment he desperately needed for his cancer.

Meet Yaza and Chewa

Chewa was devastated when she was told her son, Yaza, had cancer.

“I never knew that children could develop cancer. I felt so worried and cried all day.”

Yaza developed an extreme fever but local doctors could not identify what was wrong with him. The family had to make a three-hour journey to Yangon Children’s Hospital in Myanmar, which is supported by World Child Cancer, where he was finally diagnosed with leukemia.

Childhood cancer, if detected early enough, can be cured. By supporting the training of healthcare workers and raising awareness amongst local communities on the early warning signs of childhood cancer we can ensure more children like Yaza survive their cancer.

Continuing education

Graeme Abernethy (below) is a music teacher at Dulwich College International and spent two months in 2018 providing music sessions at the Heroes School in the cancer unit of Yangon Children’s Hospital in Myanmar.

The Heroes School, set up and supported by World Child Cancer, allows children to continue their education during their treatment, providing them with a much-needed break from their hospital beds and the constant reminder that they are unwell. The lessons provided by teachers at the school and volunteers, like Graeme, give the children something to look forward to, bringing positivity to the ward.

“Every time I visit the school, I’m caught up in a whirlwind of smiles and laughter with the sessions seeming to pass very quickly. And every time I leave the hospital, I’m extremely aware that the experience of working there is humbling and deeply life-affirming.”

In Mexico, World Child Cancer created a series of seven awareness raising videos to be shared amongst tribal communities. With Mexico being host to over 68 indigenous languages, each video was made in a different dialect to increase understanding of the early warning signs of childhood cancer amongst communities where children are most at risk of misdiagnosis.

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Families who come to the hospital with their sick child often travel for many hours and arrive with no place to stay and are forced to sleep on the floor of the wards, around the hospital or even in the parking lot.

2018 was the first full year in operation of our 'We Care' family support unit in Cameroon which provides families of children with cancer a home from home. The 'We Care' unit has now been home to over 289 families, providing a safe place to stay while their child receives treatment.

Meet Assabenatou
Assabenatou stands today as a happy, proud 21-year-old woman; six years on from when she was first treated for Burkitt Lymphoma at Banso Baptist Hospital in Cameroon.

In 2018, Assabenatou returned to the hospital to meet with World Child Cancer volunteer, Professor Hesseling, and Nurse Vera who cared for her when she was a sick child.

"Nurse Vera and the team at Banso Baptist Hospital are my family. They saved my life and I will never forget that."

World Child Cancer works to give children with cancer the gift of growing up. Peter Hesseling, who has volunteered in Cameroon for several years through World Child Cancer’s twinning partnership program, commented;

"When I asked what she wanted to do in life, Assabenatou told me she wanted to sew. We are so pleased to see Assabenatou has now enrolled on a two-year apprenticeship with a professional seamstress."
Improving end of life

2018 was a standout year for our program in Bangladesh as the first pediatric palliative care unit in the country was opened with the help of the palliative care project which is supported by World Child Cancer. An estimated two million children need palliative care in Bangladesh but fewer than 1% currently gain access to it. This new unit will help more children gain access to the care they desperately need.

Improving access to treatment

We continued to support the network of hospitals on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines that care for children with cancer. This included supporting the salaries and training of nurses who are integral to caring for children with cancer, raising awareness of childhood cancer in local communities and subsidizing the costs of essential medicines for families. Through support from World Child Cancer, more healthcare professionals have been able to engage in policy making debates about training as well as national advocacy activities.
We helped 6,424 children get a faster route to better treatment in 2018.

### Income

In 2018 our total income amounted to $112,370 and here’s where it came from:

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<thead>
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<th>Source</th>
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<td>Foundations</td>
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What’s to come in 2019

In 2019, we will be launching a new three-year program to give the ‘Gift of Growing Up’ to children with cancer in Bangladesh. During the year over 6,000 children are expected to develop cancer in Bangladesh, yet just a fraction of these will ever receive an accurate diagnosis and even fewer will receive any form of effective treatment. By supporting the training of doctors and nurses, empowering nurses to provide better care and supporting families emotionally and financially, we will change the lives of thousands of children for the better.

We will also be embarking on a first-time collaboration with The Children’s Hospital Trust in South Africa to support pediatric oncologists working in Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. This new initiative will see pairs of nurses travel to South Africa to learn critical skills to care for children with cancer.

This project is part of a wider three-year partnership with the UBS Optimus Foundation. With their support we will create West Africa’s first Center of Excellence for pediatric oncology at Korle Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra, Ghana. The center will provide fellowships for paediatricians across sub-Saharan Africa and aims to prove the cost-effectiveness of childhood cancer treatment in Africa.

Most childhood cancers, if detected early enough, can be cured

Support our work
You can find out more about our work and donate at: worldchildcancer.us

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