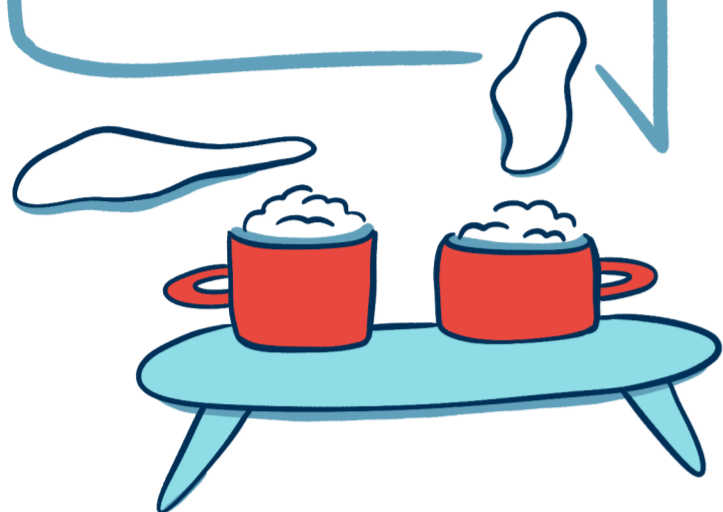


# 1 What?

Before you have the conversation, consider how much the children already know about your diagnosis and what they think is happening before giving them further information.



# 2 Who?

Identify someone you can practice the conversation with before talking to the children. This can be a great way to alleviate any anxiety you may have, and it will help you figure out exactly what you want to say.



# 3 Where?

When you know what you want to say, choose a calm, safe place where the children will be comfortable and there will be no interruptions. Think about having reassuring items around like a family pet, stuffed animals or a special fluffy blanket.



# 4 How?

Use simple, age-appropriate language. It's completely fine to let their questions guide what you share.

For example: If they ask if you (Mum/Dad) will die, reply gently but honestly saying yes, and that no one knows when exactly that will be.



# Space

If your children need it, be prepared to give them lots of cuddles and reassurance.

# Listen

Remember to listen to your children without making any assumptions about what they might be thinking or feeling.



# THE RUTH STRAUSS FOUNDATION'S GUIDE TO

# Starting conversations with children about incurable cancer



# Expecting the Unexpected

Children may need some extra time to process the information and surprise you with questions or comments when you least expect it. It is ok to tell them if you don't know the answer, or if you need to time to get the right answer for them.



# Schools

Reassure your children by letting them know you will be informing the school of what is happening and will ask them to wrap support around them based on their needs.



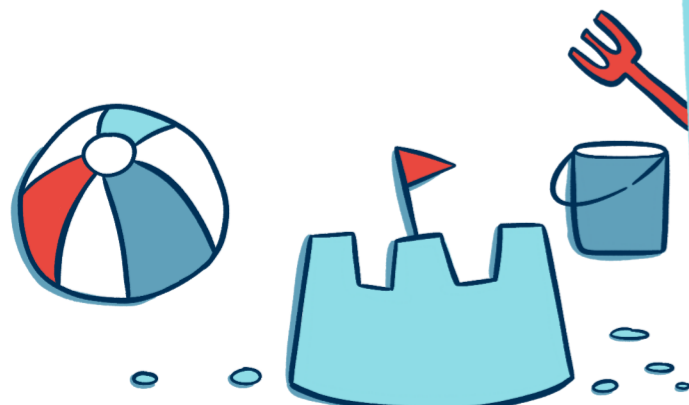
# Support & Involve

Let them know you are there to support them. But don't forget about you! There may be times you are sad, worried, and angry too and that's ok.



# Memories

Plan to do one small special thing together every day. They don't have to be bucket list memories, just activities your family enjoys.



For support, further information, resources or questions, please scan the QR code or visit: [www.ruthstraussfoundation.com/familyresources](http://www.ruthstraussfoundation.com/familyresources)

