

breast
cancer
care

the breast cancer
support charity



Talking with your children about breast cancer

Diagnosed with breast cancer

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Introduction

When there is a diagnosis of breast cancer in the family many parents and carers find themselves asking the question: ‘What are we going to tell the children?’.

We know that children are less frightened if they know what’s happening, even if they don’t fully understand. So, though you may find it difficult, in most cases talking with your children about your breast cancer will help you both.

In this booklet we explain what children can understand at different ages about a serious illness like cancer and how they may respond to the news that you have breast cancer. It doesn’t tell you exactly what to say to your child or children (we use children throughout the text) because every family is different. But it will give you some ideas about how to tell them and what other parents’ experiences have been.

This booklet covers talking with your children when you have been diagnosed with primary breast cancer. If you have secondary breast cancer (when cancer cells from the breast have spread to other parts of the body) some of the information will be useful, but there are other resources available to help with the different issues secondary breast cancer may raise. You can find out more about useful organisations and books in our **Secondary breast cancer resource pack**.

Although we mostly refer to ‘mothers’ throughout the text, the booklet is also intended for fathers and may be helpful for any adult who has reason to talk with children about breast cancer.

‘I really love my kids, they’ve kept me grounded through all of this.’

Jenny (children aged 23, 21, 14 and 12)



Telling your children

Many mothers might want to put off telling their children they have breast cancer or even avoid it altogether because they are afraid of upsetting them or afraid of getting upset in front of them. They may also feel that by not telling their children they are protecting them. They may worry about being asked difficult questions, such as: 'Are you going to die?'. But children usually know when something is upsetting or worrying a parent. Even if you try to hide it, it is likely to show in your face and your voice, the way you talk to them and behave with them, and the way that others treat you.

Children are very quick to pick up on secrets. If they feel left out they may think they have done something to upset you or they may make up their own story about what is happening, which may be far worse than the truth. They may not tell you they are worried, they may not know what's going on inside themselves. But the fear and uncertainty could have a damaging effect on their behaviour, their schoolwork, and their friendships. Being open and honest with them helps them trust you.

'My partner and I wanted to tell them together. We spoke individually to the children at each subsequent stage, for example, about the chemotherapy and the radiotherapy. We wanted to ensure they understood what was happening and could ask any questions they had as and when they arose. We invited each child to speak to either of us whenever they wanted to. It was important that what was going on was not hidden from them.'

Perlita (partner's children aged
13 and 7 at diagnosis)

Keeping secrets is also tiring for you. There is also a risk that if you don't tell them, they will find out another way and this may make them feel they are being left out or they are not important enough to be included.

Who might tell them?

For most children, information about your breast cancer is best coming from you and your partner if you have one. Children usually handle difficult news best if it's given by someone they love and trust. But if you're finding it difficult, it might help to get someone else you and your children know well to be with you. Family and friends can be a vital source of support when talking with your children, particularly if you're a single parent.

When to tell them

Most women talk to their partner, close friends or relatives about the possibility of breast cancer when they first notice something wrong or go to see their GP (local doctor) or breast specialist. But they tend to wait until later to tell their children. Some tell them after tests have confirmed they have breast cancer and others wait until after surgery.

There are no set rules and it will depend on their age and how you usually talk with them about illness and other issues in the family. But the longer you leave telling them, the more likely it is your children will realise that all is not well, and to start worrying and guessing what it might be.

Having to talk with your children at a time when you feel vulnerable and emotional yourself can be very difficult. Your children are likely to see you upset and tearful over the coming weeks or months but this can allow them to show their own worries and emotions. However, if you can be calm and confident when you tell them about your cancer, even if you don't feel it inside, it may help your children feel less upset or panicky. Talking to them in a setting in which they are used to spending time and where they feel comfortable.

It's a good idea to keep talking with your children regularly about what's going on so they feel involved and informed and are able to ask any questions. You may need to repeat explanations, especially to younger children.

Finding the right words

What you decide to tell your children will depend on a number of different things. You may be a family that talks openly about everything or you may come from a background or culture where intimate or serious issues are not talked about, or are kept between adults. You may talk more easily to one of your children than to another. Your children's understanding and reaction will depend on their age and character.

Many people find it helpful to discuss what they plan to say with their partner or a friend before talking with their children. Or you may want to involve your breast care nurse in this discussion. Practising the kind of wording you want to use beforehand also helps. However, even with careful thought the conversation may not go as planned. There may be questions or a reaction that you didn't expect. The best approach is to keep things simple and avoid complicated explanations. It's useful to agree the wording you will use when talking with your children about your cancer with any other adults who may talk with them, for example your partner. This will ensure you are consistent and minimise confusion.

It may be helpful to start by asking your children what they know or understand by the word cancer as this can help you tailor your discussion. If your children ask questions you don't know the answer to just say so. It's important not to make things up, as children will usually remember what you say even though you may not.

'I told him that Mummy had a lump in her breast called cancer and that she needed to go into hospital to get the lump removed. I told him that I would only need to be there for a couple of nights and that he could come to see me while I was there.'

Catrin



One of the most difficult things for many adults is using the word cancer because many people are fearful of cancer. This is not necessarily true for children, who may simply accept that it's the name for what is wrong with you and may have overheard this word used in the family or at school anyway.

If you can, it's best to use the word 'cancer' from the beginning, and to explain it using language that your children understand. This may help make the word less frightening for them. For example, you could explain that the body is made up of tiny building blocks called cells. Cancer is a disease caused by cells changing. When cells change into cancer cells, they don't look like normal cells and they behave differently. Cancer cells can stop the body working properly. You could also explain that there are lots of different types of cancer, and breast cancer is one of these. But how you describe and talk about cancer will very much depend on your children's ages.

If you have more than one child, even if they are different ages it may be a good idea to tell them together so that they start with the same information. They will understand and take different things away and it's likely that siblings will talk to one another. It can be useful to encourage this so they are able to support one another.

Try to make sure your children get accurate and sufficient information about your breast cancer and treatment, otherwise they may go looking for information themselves or imagine the worst case scenarios. You should let them know that if they want to, they can come back to you, or to their siblings, to ask more. You can also talk with them individually at a later date.

It's important to talk about what's going on in front of the children and avoid whispered conversations. Although this may feel difficult, talking and being as open as possible about the situation will help you and your family.

How children may react

Children react differently depending on their age, temperament, stage of development and their relationship with you. So it's hard to predict what will happen when you tell your children about your breast cancer.

You may face some difficult questions. Children will ask you about the future and who will look after them, whether you will get better or whether you are going to die. It's important to be as honest and open as you can but it's fine to say that you don't know. Try to be realistic, yet hopeful, but be careful not to make promises you are not sure you can keep.

Most of all, your children need to know that everyone's doing all they can to make you better, that you still love and care for them, and that there are things they can do to help.

Alternatively, they may respond by asking what is for tea or if they can go and watch the television. Like adults, some children find it easier to express their emotions than others. Try to give them time and opportunities to talk about how they feel. It's best not to push them if they would rather not talk, especially at first. Your children may prefer to talk things over with their friends rather than with you, especially if they are older. If this is the case, you may want to talk with friends' parents first, so that everyone is saying the same thing.

'All of them asked detailed, age-appropriate questions. From the word go they were all very supportive of me and each of them, according to their differing ages and characters, found ways to help the family as a whole.'

Eleanor

‘We were all shocked rather than upset initially. They seemed to understand what I was saying. Dan asked what was going to happen and I said I didn’t really know, I was back at hospital on Tuesday and I would know more then.’

Jennifer

Children may respond to the news in a similar way to adults. They may not feel like eating, their sleep may be disturbed and they may have trouble concentrating at school or with homework. They may get angry or upset over what seem like relatively small problems. Younger children in particular may revert to behaviour that they haven’t shown for a long time, such as baby talk or bed-wetting. The important thing is to be sensitive to changes in their behaviour or mood. These are to be expected and are a normal response.

Changes in or unacceptable behaviour and poor school results may be a sign that your child is feeling worried or insecure. You may be tempted to ignore these behavioural changes because you feel guilty that your children are affected by your cancer. However, by acknowledging these changes you can encourage your children to talk about what is happening. Children are likely to be more anxious and upset if the rules suddenly change. Clear limits and boundaries can help them maintain a sense of normality and cope with their anxieties.

At times children may appear to be thoughtless and unkind, but that’s because they have other things aside from the cancer on their minds, such as school or friends. But they can also be very supportive, and will sometimes surprise you by doing or saying something that shows they understand.

In some cases, children may have more serious or longer-term problems as a result of a parent’s illness. These can include becoming increasingly withdrawn, having difficulties eating and sleeping or fear of separation. If you are concerned about how a child is coping, speak to your GP (local doctor), school nurse or specialist team. They will be able to point you in the right direction to get some help from trained school counsellors.

You may find it useful to read our booklet **Breast cancer and your child's school** which gives information about possible ways that might help to communicate with a child's school about your diagnosis and treatment.

It may also be useful to look at the section 'Seeking help' if you feel you need further support.

Under six

What you say to very young children about your breast cancer will depend on the words you normally use for breasts and feeling ill. You don't want to frighten them or overload them with information but you may decide to tell them that your breast – or whatever word they use for it – is sick, sore or poorly and that you are going to hospital to make it better. As well as talking, you may want to show them what is happening using dolls or teddies or by drawing pictures. Storybooks can also help to explain things and prompt questions (see the list of books for children at the end of this booklet). It's always a good idea to read through a book you want to use, before sharing it with your children, to make sure it fits in with your circumstances.

You might like to share the book **Mummy's Lump** with your children. It's a simple picture book aimed at children aged seven and under and follows a family through the mum's diagnosis and treatment for breast cancer.

Most young children don't like changes to their routine or may worry about being separated from you. When you go into hospital they need to know that you will be back soon, and that they won't be left alone or with someone they don't know. They like to know details about their daily routine, such as who will be giving them their meals, taking them to nursery and putting them to bed.

If you stay in hospital after surgery it will be reassuring for them to see where you are and know that you want to see them. It is a good idea to explain to them that you both need to be extra careful when cuddling and that you may not be able to pick them up for a while. If they are unable to visit you in hospital, you could suggest an alternative treat, such as staying with a friend or favourite relative.

With very young children, one of the most important things is to make it clear from the start that your illness is not their fault. Young children sometimes blame themselves for what happens to the adults in their lives and they may link your breast cancer to something they've said or done, such as telling you that they hate you in the middle of a tantrum. This can make them feel guilty, so they need to be reassured, whether or not they tell you their fears.

They may also think that your illness is catching, like chicken pox or a cold, so you should need to explain that this is not the case.

Ask them if there is anything that they are worried about or if they have any questions.

If you do not have family and friends living close by who can help with childcare, the social worker at the hospital or the Daycare Trust (see 'Other organisations' section on page 27) can give you advice about childcare in your area.

7–12 years

In this age group it helps to try to find out how much children already know about cancer so that you can correct any misunderstandings, for example that everyone who has cancer will die. Even if you are reluctant to use the word cancer your children or their friends will probably know the word anyway from other people or from the television or the internet. They may understand more about it than you realise, know that there are different types of cancer and that people can recover from it. A good place to start with children of this age may be to tell them what has happened and what you and the doctors are going to do about it. You can ask them to let you know what they want to know about your diagnosis or treatment and when they want to talk as this may be different from what you would imagine.

Most children study the human body at primary school and will have some basic ideas about cells and the different parts of the body. You may want to look at some factual information with them or read a suitable story. Try to talk with them about your feelings and encourage them to talk about theirs too.

If you are going to have chemotherapy it is worth preparing your children for the side effects you may experience such as nausea, tiredness and the fact that you might lose your hair. Equally, explain to them that these symptoms will eventually subside and your hair will grow back.

We have a comic book for children aged eight and above – **Medikidz explain breast cancer** – which may help your children to understand more about breast cancer and it's treatment.

Once you have a diagnosis, telling their teacher/s and possibly the school nurse will help prepare them for answering questions or giving your children extra support. Most schools will also have a member of staff who is responsible for pastoral care. You may find our booklet **Breast cancer and your child's school** helpful.

School-age children are more aware of how your illness affects them, and they may be very anxious or resentful. Routine is just as important for them as for younger children. They want to know that the detail of their daily lives will not change dramatically. Who will take them to school? Who will care for them after school? Who will cook their tea? They need to know that once you're feeling better you'll be doing these things again.

'We told them Perlita was going to be taking some medicine that may make her lose her hair. Alexis would rush to the door each time Perlita came home to see if she had lost her hair. She had no concept of time and so was expecting her hair to be gone straight away even before Perlita had started chemotherapy. She was most disappointed that it was taking so long to happen! When Perlita did lose her hair and had her head shaved, there was a big smile on Alexis's face. She said that Perlita looked cool and had a nice shaped head.'

Chris (Perlita's partner)

'[My 12-year-old] initially started having trouble sleeping. He was often awake at night and we spent a couple of hours downstairs. This did improve after my first op. He also didn't cope very well with my hair loss. He hated me wearing my headscarf in public and wanted me to wear my wig, which I hated wearing. But I decided that he was also going through enough so we agreed that when I was out with him I would wear my wig.'

Jenny

Sometimes children can feel worried about changes in your appearance and what others may say or think. You can talk about this and how to relieve their anxiety. For example if you have lost your hair because of chemotherapy treatment your children may prefer you to wear a wig when picking them up from school.

Teenagers

Most teenagers will have heard of cancer and may know – or think they know – something about it. They or their friends may also know people who have died from cancer, so it's useful to find out how much they know about breast cancer. For example, do they know that treatments can be very effective and having breast cancer doesn't automatically mean you're going to die? Teenagers may want more detail about breast cancer and your treatment but they may also prefer to find out about it on their own. You may want to point them towards reliable sources of information such as Breast Cancer Care's booklets or website – there are also other sources of support in the back of this booklet.

Some teenagers may appear unconcerned about the whole thing and, like some adults, try to pretend it's not happening. You might find this hurtful, but they may cope by ignoring your breast cancer and carrying on as if nothing has happened. Others may be emotional and withdrawn. It's important not to take this personally and allow them to express themselves. Although they may not want to talk to anyone about your cancer at first, you may want to brief someone else they are close to, such as a grandparent, friend or family friend, to listen and answer questions if the need arises.

Teenagers may be anxious that they will get breast cancer too, particularly if they have heard that it can run in families. In fact, about 95% of breast cancers are not related to family history and you may want to reassure your children about this.

Boys going through puberty may find it particularly embarrassing to talk about breast cancer. They may be upset about what is happening, but be unable to talk to you about it. It may be easier for fathers to talk with their sons in this situation, or for another male relative or friend to talk with them.

One thing that most teenagers have in common is that they are easily embarrassed – especially by their parents. Appearances are important to them and they may need reassurance that, fully dressed, you will look the same as before. If you are going to have chemotherapy you may want to talk to them about the possibility of losing your hair.

It is normal for teenagers to be struggling with feelings of wanting independence and to break away from their parents or family, and they may not know how to negotiate with a parent who needs to depend on them for a change. They may feel torn between wanting to be there for you and dealing with their own lives or problems, such as relationships, friends and exams. It may be helpful to talk with your child's teacher or form tutor so they are aware of the situation. If your child is preparing for exams, the school can apply to the exam board for special consideration. This will only happen if you request it.



Keep talking

Telling your children you have breast cancer, answering their questions and dealing with their initial responses may be just the beginning. There will be times during and after your treatment when more talking and explaining will be necessary. Throughout this time try to keep the lines of communication open.

From time to time there will be new information to give your children, for example about your treatment or outcome of a follow-up appointment. This means they may have further questions. Often the questions may take you by surprise, perhaps when you're cooking or watching TV rather than when you're ready and prepared.

You may want to encourage older children to talk with your doctors and nurses, perhaps when you go for a hospital appointment. This can help them understand that a lot is being done for you and that hospitals can be friendly, supportive places.

Children can be accepting, frightened or very curious of physical changes, and after surgery they may ask about your scar or whether you look different. You might want to explain to them what the surgeons have done, but whether or not you show them will depend on you and them and what is normal in your family. The question may not arise if they are not used to seeing you undressed, but if they are, it may simply happen naturally.

Younger children are often curious and wish to see your scars whereas older children/teenagers can be less comfortable in seeing scars and being overloaded with information. The key is to talk to them and take their lead as to what they would find helpful.

'I told all the children that I would discuss it with them at any time and not hide the truth from them. I was open with them all the time and they would often tease me about aspects such as losing my hair.'

Karen

'The main difference it made to them was that Perlita practically lived with them following the surgery and for the duration of the chemotherapy. They became used to Perlita sleeping and resting a lot. They were both able to talk with one or both of us about the diagnosis and treatment whenever they wanted to.'

Chris (Perlita's partner)

You may need some extra privacy for a while – you can explain that you're not shutting them out, you just need a little time. Your children may wonder what you're using to replace your missing breast if you've had a mastectomy. If you are wearing a prosthesis they may want to see and feel it.

If you're planning reconstructive surgery, you may decide to wait until it's completed before asking your children how they feel about seeing what you look like. Again, if you explain why you'd rather wait, your children will feel less excluded and anxious.

If you're having radiotherapy or chemotherapy, you may want to warn your children that you might feel ill, grumpy or tired at times and you might need some extra help. Being able to help can make younger children feel important, so perhaps you can give them one or two small, regular jobs. Older children may be helpful and co-operative from time to time but it's important not to expect them to take on too much responsibility.

Seeking help

Your child's behaviour and emotions may change during your treatment and afterwards. This can be worrying and exhausting, especially when you are trying to concentrate on your own health and wellbeing. If there are long-standing issues with your child's behaviour or their emotional wellbeing, these may be more noticeable at a time of anxiety (like your diagnosis of breast cancer or during your treatment) and this may make their behaviour more difficult to deal with.

Try to see if you can understand the meaning of the behaviour rather than react to it. If you notice your child having long periods where they are feeling low, withdrawn or not being interested in what is going on around them talk to your GP or treatment team.

If necessary they can refer your child to a counsellor or to your local child and adolescent mental health service.

'They were very upset and Emily had nightmares. But we found many ways to distract ourselves and make things easier. Naomi helped me design a quilt to make during treatment and Emily helped choose the fabric. We spoke to Deborah a lot more frequently on the phone and kept her up to date. She wrote me long encouraging letters. They supported each other – and still do.'

Eleanor



After treatment

When your treatment is finished, it's understandable that your children want things 'back to normal' as soon as possible. They may want reassurance that you're better and won't be ill again, but they also want their own lives to return to normal. This may not always be straightforward for the whole family, particularly in the early weeks and months. Children may find this hard to grasp, especially if they feel they have been thoughtful and considerate during treatment. You may need to explain that getting better can take quite a long time, weeks or even months.

They may also have lingering doubts about your recovery. When you have a follow-up appointment this might be a worry for them as well as you. Also, if someone they know is later diagnosed with cancer, or someone's parent has died, it can bring some of the worries back. Try to continue to be as honest as you can, without making promises you may not be able to keep.

It is probably best to say that although you can't promise, you and your doctors don't expect you to be ill again, but whatever happens your children will always be looked after and cared for.

Once again, talking with them about how you and they feel is probably the best way to deal with any concerns. If you have been able to establish an open and trusting relationship during your cancer, you will hopefully be able to continue to talk about your feelings and acknowledge any worries that arise.

Each stage of your treatment and recovery will bring different feelings, anxieties and highs and lows. But if you are able to talk honestly and openly with your child or children at each step, most families can find a great source of love and support from each other.

'Make plans for after treatment is finished and between treatments as this shows them that life will get back to normal.'

Karen

Further support

Further reading

Resources for parents

Breast cancer and your child's school
Breast Cancer Care, 2013

This booklet is to help people affected by breast cancer communicate with their child's school about their diagnosis and treatment.

**Talking to children and teenagers
when an adult has cancer**
Macmillan Cancer Support, 2013

A booklet and CD outlining steps parents can take to help their children understand what is happening.

**As big as it gets: supporting a child
when a parent is seriously ill**
Julie Stokes and Di Stubbs
Winston's Wish, 2007
ISBN 978 0 9539123 9 1

This booklet aims to help parents and children cope with a serious illness in the family.

**How to talk so teens will listen and
listen so teens will talk**

Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish
Harper Collins e-books, 2010
Page Numbers Source ISBN 0060741252

Not specific to cancer. A guide to practical and effective communication with teenagers. American. Hard to get hold of first-hand in printed form, but available as an e-book and may also be available second-hand.

Resources for children

Mummy's Lump
Breast Cancer Care

For young children, this picture book is for any family who needs to talk about the difficult subject of cancer. It covers diagnosis, going to the hospital, treatment and hair loss.

Medikidz explain breast cancer

Aimed at 8–15 year olds, this book helps children understand and come to terms with what is going on around them when someone close to them is diagnosed with breast cancer.

Eek my mummy has breast cancer

Emma Sutherland
2013
ISBN 978 1 907463 78 5

Written by a 12-year-old girl about her feelings when her mother is diagnosed with breast cancer. For early teens and young people.

The secret C – straight talking about cancer

Julie Stokes

Winston's Wish, 2009 (2nd revised edition)

ISBN 978 0955953 927

A book to help adults and children talk openly about the issues and feelings involved when someone has cancer. For ages 7–10.

The huge bag of worries

Virginia Ironside

Hodder Children's Books, 2011

ISBN 978 0 340 90317 9

Not specific to cancer.

Sammy's mommy has cancer

Sherry Kohlenberg

Magination Press, New York, 1993

ISBN 978 0945354 550

A sensitive, straightforward, illustrated American storybook for children aged 3–8.

When your parent has cancer: a guide for teens

US Department for Health and Human Services

www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/coping/When-Your-Parent-Has-Cancer.pdf

Another American resource, this is aimed at teenagers who have a parent with cancer.

Cancer in the school community

Cancer Council New South Wales

www.cancercouncil.com.au/2391/cancer-information/general-information-cancer-information/more-information-resources/online-resources/cancer-in-school-community

Cancer in the school community contains information that can help others respond effectively and sensitively to issues that arise when someone is affected by cancer. Although this is an Australian publication, and was written for an audience of public and private school staff, the content may still be helpful.

Other organisations

General organisations

Daycare Trust

2nd Floor, Novas Contemporary Urban Centre, 73–81
Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 0NQ

Tel: 0845 872 6260 (020 7940 7510)

Fax: 020 7940 7515

Website: www.daycaretrust.org.uk

Email: info@daycaretrust.org.uk

Daycare Trust is a national childcare charity that has been working since November 1986 to promote high quality affordable childcare for all. Offers information and services to help people make the right decision about childcare for their child.

Get Connected

Tel: 0808 808 4994

Website: www.getconnected.org.uk

The UK's free, confidential helpline service for young people under 25 who need help, but don't know where to turn. Call them freephone from 1pm–11pm every day.

Health talk online

Website: www.healthtalkonline.org/Cancer/Breast_Cancer

Provides free information about health issues, by sharing people's real-life experiences. Has videos and audio files of people sharing their stories about cancer and other topics.

Hope Support Services

Website: www.hopesupportservices.org.uk

An organisation supporting young people aged 11–25 when a close family member is diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. Provides one-to-one and online support, weekly youth sessions and monthly activities.

Partnership for Children

26–27 Market Place, Kingston upon Thames,
Surrey KT1 1JH

Telephone: 020 8974 6004

Website: www.partnershipforchildren.org.uk

Email: info@partnershipforchildren.org.uk

Partnership for Children is an independent charity which promotes the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children. It has resources for parents and teachers to help young children cope with difficult situations. Many of these resources are available free of charge on this website.

Riprap

Website: www.riprap.org.uk

A website offering support and advice for 12–16 year olds who have a parent with cancer. Includes real-life stories, discussion forums, information and tips.

Cancer organisations

Macmillan Cancer Support

89 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7UQ

General enquiries: 020 7840 7840

Helpline: 0808 808 0000

Website: www.macmillan.org.uk

Textphone: 0808 808 0121 or Text Relay

Provides practical, medical and financial support for people with cancer.

Helping you face breast cancer

If you've been diagnosed with breast cancer there's a lot to take in. It can be an emotional time for you, your family and friends. Our free information and support services are here to help – on the phone, or online 24 hours a day.

Ask us

Calls to our free Helpline are answered by specialist nurses and trained staff with personal experience of breast cancer. They'll understand the issues you're facing and can answer your questions. Or you can Ask the Nurse by email instead via our website.

Free Helpline **0808 800 6000** (Text Relay 18001)
Monday–Friday 9am–5pm, Saturday 10am–2pm
www.breastcancercare.org.uk/ATN

Expert information

Written and reviewed by healthcare professionals and people affected by breast cancer, our free booklets and other information resources cover all aspects of living with breast cancer. Download or order booklets from our website or call the Helpline.

Talk to someone who understands

Our Someone Like Me service puts you in contact with someone else who's had breast cancer and who's been fully trained to help. This can be over the phone or by email.

You can also chat to other people going through breast cancer on our online discussion Forum. It's easy to use, professionally moderated and available to read any time of day.

Find out more about all of our services for people with breast cancer at www.breastcancercare.org.uk/services or phone the Helpline.

We're here for you: help us to be there for other people too

If you found this booklet helpful, please use this form to send us a donation. Our information resources and other services are only free because of support from people such as you.

We want to be there for every person facing the emotional and physical trauma of a breast cancer diagnosis. Donate today and together we can ensure that everyone affected by breast cancer has someone to turn to.

Donate by post

Please accept my donation of **£10/£20/my own choice of £**

I enclose a cheque/PO/CAF voucher made payable to
Breast Cancer Care

Donate online

You can give using a debit or credit card at
www.breastcancercare.org.uk/donate

My details

Name

Address

Postcode

Email address

We might occasionally want to send you more information about our services and activities

- Please tick if you're happy to receive email from us
- Please tick if you don't want to receive post from us

We won't pass on your details to any other organisation or third parties.

Please return this form to Breast Cancer Care, Freepost RRRKZ-ARZY-YCKG,
5-13 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0NS



About this booklet

Talking with your children was written by Breast Cancer Care's clinical specialists, and reviewed by healthcare professionals and people affected by breast cancer.



**For a full list of the sources
we used to research it:**

Phone 0345 092 0808

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the breast cancer
support charity

Breast Cancer Care is the only UK-wide charity providing specialist support and tailored information for anyone affected by breast cancer.

Our clinical expertise and emotional support network help thousands of people find a way to live with, through and beyond breast cancer.

Visit www.breastcancercare.org.uk or call our free Helpline on **0808 800 6000** (Text Relay 18001).

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