



**GILDA'S
CLUB
SIMCOE
MUSKOKA**

Child, Youth & Family Program

An Affiliate of the
CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY



**FREE evidence-based professionally facilitated psychosocial support programs
for children, youth & families impacted by cancer**

Support At Gilda's Club



What We Do & Who We Serve

Gilda's Club Simcoe Muskoka offers **FREE** professional emotional and social support services to those impacted by Cancer. Who qualifies? Northern and Central Ontario residents who are:

- Living with a cancer diagnosis
- Have finished cancer treatment
- Caregiving for someone who has cancer
- Have a family member or friend with cancer
- Grieving the death of someone who has died from cancer

Program Format

Programs are currently being offered virtually over zoom with some in person options available.

Visit our website for our full calendar

<https://gildasclubsimcoemuskoka.org>



Contact Us:

Jocelyn Leworthy, MSc, CCLS
Child, Youth & Family Coordinator
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Call: 705-726-5199 Ext 239
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Barrie, ON



Available Services

Child Life Support

Sessions with our Child Life Specialist focus on providing developmentally-appropriate support through play-based and expressive, therapeutic activities. Sessions are catered to each child and/or family, and aim to promote understanding and coping with cancer, treatment, death, feelings, changes, separation from loved ones, etc.

Educational Workshops

Gilda's Club Simcoe Muskoka offers educational, play-based workshops for children and youth that focus on providing information about cancer, related medical experiences, and developing healthy coping strategies to support feelings that may be experienced when someone is impacted by cancer. There are also workshops hosted to provide guidance and support to parents supporting children and youth when there is a cancer diagnosis in the family.

Support Groups

Gilda's Club offers professionally facilitated, evidence-based peer support groups for children, youth, and family members touched by cancer. Support groups offer children and youth the opportunity to connect with others, while also serving as a safe and welcoming space to share feelings/experiences while engaging in play-based and therapeutic activities.

Recreational Activities

Gilda's Club offers an array of recreation based activities, such as yoga, martial arts, dance, baking, and arts classes. There are also social activities that bring families together for fun that encourage children and youth to connect with others, learn new skills, and find creative modalities for self expression.



Support for Caregivers



Child Life Consultations

Child life consultations are available as needed for caregivers and clinicians working with or supporting children and youth impacted by a cancer diagnosis. Whether it be related to learning how to best support a child, prepare them for a cancer related experience, how to talk to them about cancer, or to seek out specific resources, adults can always reach out for guidance and support from our Child Youth and Family Coordinator.

Educational Sessions

Gilda's Club offers a variety of educational sessions that are geared towards adults caregiving for children and youth impacted by cancer. Sessions may take form through webinar or be offered in person and cover topics such as talking to children about cancer, supporting the needs of grieving children, and more. These opportunities aim to provide adults with knowledge, skills, and resources to empower and support them in their role.



Recreation, Social Support & More

Gilda's Club Simcoe Muskoka offers a huge variety of activities for adults. There are so many opportunities to choose from including yoga, Pilates, art classes, journaling group, mindfulness, cancer related mental health series groups, and so much more. There is also a Pediatric Caregiver Wellness group that has been designed specifically for adults caring for children and teens living with cancer.





"Noogieland" a space just for kids!





"The Hub" Teen Lounge






Community Outreach

Worry Creatures in the classroom & in the community

Worry Creatures in the Classroom: This is a creative outreach initiative that Gilda's Club Simcoe Muskoka offers to elementary classes in central Ontario to raise strengthen partnership with educators while also utilizing a creative modality to support the psychosocial well-being of students. Children get to decorate their own "worry creature" and will get to draw or write about their worries to feed the creature. The workshop is delivered virtually and includes a story. Worry Creature templates are provided, so that students can design their own to use at home. Our Child Youth & Family Coordinator engages kids in discussion about worries, providing education, normalizing them, validating concerns that children share, and providing practical coping strategies that can help children cope. This initiative has been incredibly popular and received so much positive feedback that it was expanded into the community to include support from local libraries!



"Thank you for such a timely presentation- our students certainly enjoyed decorating their worry creatures and sharing what the worry about. The topic was very timely with COVID on everyone's mind - especially if you are 4 or 5 years old. It was a great opportunity to **hear student voice about their worries.** This will help us know what to discuss in class to support their understanding of - germs- health care, needles etc. which we already talk about but **it gives us more direction of where students are in their understanding"**

- Kindergarten Teacher



I am worried about missing my family



I am worried about someone dying



I am worried about monsters



I am worried about Cancer





What Members Are Saying...

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"[My daughter] absolutely LOVED Jocelyn after one brief intro session and decided immediately that she'd like to move forward with virtual sessions. After completing a series of 6 sessions, my daughter had a safe space to allocate for her own grief journey. She worked through a variety of different arts & crafts, and came up with a concrete plan for her coping plan going forward. My daughter was sad for the sessions to come to an end as she devolved such a great rapport with Jocelyn. Jocelyn is gifted in her ability to connect with children and we are so grateful our paths crossed!"

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"My children had the opportunity to explore feelings/mindfulness with someone not in the family"

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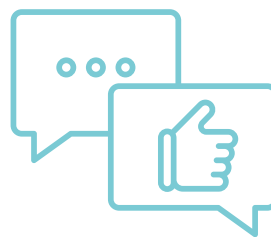
"[The program] was a safe place for [my children] to talk about what was on their mind"

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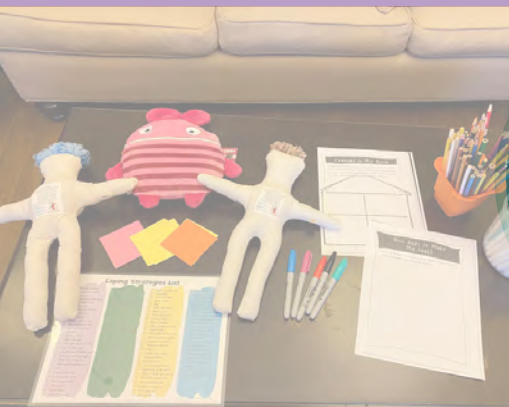
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"[My Child] doesn't talk much about cancer or his feelings about it (or really anything related) so I wasn't sure what he would think. He said it was the best ever! He actually really enjoyed talking about it and hearing about other people's fears and wish trips, etc. He said "I got to talk about things I never got to talk about before."

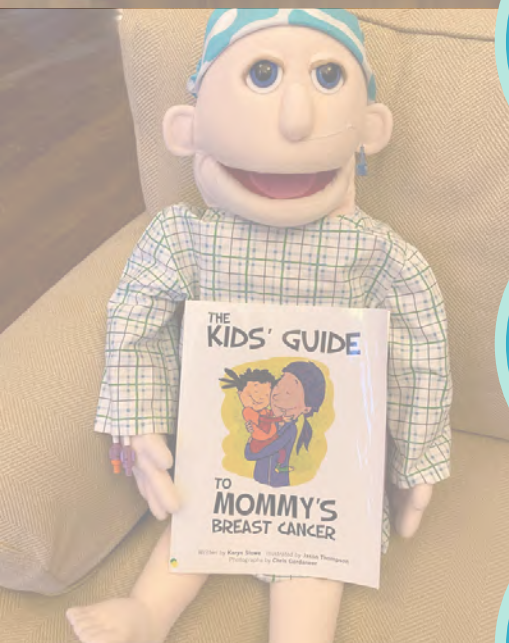
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Program Highlights



We are an affiliate of the Cancer Support Community and offer high-quality, evidence-based, professionally facilitated programming. This is inclusive of branded support groups, such as "Kids Grieve Too".



Gilda's Club Simcoe Muskoka provides specifically tailored community play-based psychosocial supports from a Masters-level Certified Child Life Specialist.



Gilda's Club Simcoe Muskoka is 1 of 2 locations in Canada.



Gilda's Club Simcoe Muskoka offers psychosocial support to families impacted by paediatric cancer.



According to our 2021 survey families share that by participating in programs their child/children:

- Had the opportunity to connect to others
- Had opportunities for self-expression
- Had spaces where their feelings and experiences were validated
- Had the opportunity to take part in activities that promoted psychosocial well-being

