



**FINDING
OUT
FINDING
HOPE**

Canteen Impact Report
April 2025: Patient and
Survivor edition



SPECIALIST YOUTH CANCER CARE

Young people facing cancer need specialised treatment and support compared to children and older adults. Canteen was founded 40 years ago by a group of teenage cancer patients and we remain committed to ensuring that young people get the unique cancer care they deserve.

Canteen is proud to have successfully advocated for the establishment of the Youth Cancer Services (YCS), which provide age-appropriate medical and psychological support in hospitals across Australia. Thanks to our ongoing work, the YCS now support around 75% of newly diagnosed young cancer patients.

Alongside this vital hospital-based care, Canteen provides specially tailored support services aimed at reducing distress, isolation and disadvantage for young cancer patients and survivors.

Our work is underpinned by world-class research and our evidence-based approach ensures that we focus our effort and resources in the areas that deliver the greatest benefit for young people.

As we launch the inaugural Youth Cancer Awareness Month, this first edition of our 2025 Impact Report showcases just a few of Canteen's services that are specially tailored for young people living with and after cancer.

Find out more at canteen.org.au/youthcancer

 1300

Around 1,300 young Australians aged 15 to 25 are diagnosed with cancer every year.

 90%

Since the 1980s, the overall survival rate for young people diagnosed with cancer has gradually increased from 79% to 90%.

 64%

The five deadliest cancers account for 64% of deaths but only 21% of the diagnoses in young people.

 30000

There are around 30,000 young cancer survivors in Australia.

CANTEEN SUPPORT AND IMPACT

Being diagnosed with cancer turns a young person's world upside down. Canteen is in their corner, providing a range of specialist support services for young cancer patients as well as young people dealing with cancer in their family.



97%

say Canteen gave them the cancer support they needed



99%

would recommend us to a friend dealing with cancer



9/10

feel less isolated after accessing Canteen services



"I have met people my age who understand the terror of being diagnosed with cancer and the physical and emotional impact that cancer has. It has helped to have people to talk to, who understand what it's like to go through treatment. Getting to know others who have had similar experiences to me has made me feel less isolated and alone."

Young cancer survivor

Youth Cancer Services

Canteen is committed to ensuring that young people are provided with age-appropriate hospital care that meets the unique physical, psychological, social and emotional needs of young cancer patients. The Youth Cancer Services (YCS) provide specialist care by a team of expert medical, nursing and allied health professionals.



The priority cancer care areas for the YCS are: fertility information and care provision, psychosocial support, and access to life-saving medical clinical trials.

Fertility

90% were told about the possible impacts on their fertility and 808 young patients had a fertility preservation procedure.

Psychosocial support

95% were offered psychosocial support, and 97% of those who wanted it received ongoing support.

Clinical trials

371 young cancer patients were enrolled in potentially life-saving clinical trials.

Robots Program

Being diagnosed with cancer can often mean being stuck in hospital or at home. It can also mean missing weeks – and sometimes months – of school. Canteen robots provide support for young cancer patients by helping them stay connected to school, friends and family.



“I will be forever grateful for all that I have gained and am still gaining from my counselling.”

Young counselling client

Counselling Service

When cancer crashes into a young person’s world, the psychological impact can be immense, often leaving young people feeling scared, anxious and overwhelmed. Canteen’s counselling services are completely free and our specially trained counsellors are available face-to-face or online.



90%

agreed they got the help they wanted



88%

said Canteen counselling was easy to access



86%

felt their well-being improved after using Canteen counselling

Thrive

Canteen's Thrive retreat is specially designed for young people aged 18-25 who have commenced or completed cancer treatment. By meeting others in similar situations and learning strategies to manage the impact of cancer, the program supports young cancer survivors' overall wellbeing.

 **92%**

would recommend Thrive to a friend

 **92%**

said Thrive helped them deal with their cancer experience

 **100%**

said they received the kind of service they wanted



"It's actually made me worry less. I used to have a bunch of pressure on my shoulders and stress and then I got to release it when I was at the camp."

Young person attending Thrive

SPACE

SPACE is an online group program for young people aged 12-25 going through active cancer treatment. It provides an opportunity to connect with others facing cancer and strengthen coping skills to help manage the impact of cancer on their life.

We interviewed young people who have attended the SPACE program and the key benefits they highlighted were:



Formation of strong connections with peers who 'get it'

"They were the first group of people that I met that also had cancer that were my age."



Having a safe and supportive environment to talk freely about their cancer experience

"It's the safe place where we can open up and talk and... not feel as though you know, we have to hide - [it's] where we've been able to be comfortable."



Gaining of new perspectives, coping tools, and resources

"I think SPACE and the mindfulness stuff that we learnt was really helpful. And I was able to deal with my emotions a lot better. Even my family said that they could see that I was doing better with my emotions afterwards."



Education and Career Service

Cancer and its treatment can make it harder for young people to stay in school or follow their career goals. Canteen's Education and Career Service provides tailored career guidance to help young people impacted by cancer explore their strengths and navigate the ever-changing job market.

 **93%**

say they got the support they needed from the service

 **92%**

felt more hopeful and positive about their future education and career



"They have been a great help in getting me closer to figuring out what I may want to do in life and for it to not be so daunting."

ECS participant

OUR VALUES AND COMMITMENTS

We are guided by our values and our commitment to ensure that everyone at Canteen feels respected, included and safe.

Diversity and Inclusion

We welcome people with diverse sexualities, gender identities and intersex variations and from all cultures, backgrounds and abilities.



Acknowledgement of Country

Canteen acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of this land. We pay respect to Elders past, present and future. We are committed to providing inclusive and appropriate support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, their kin and community.



Ngalaya (Dharawal for ally or friend in battle), is an artwork commissioned by Canteen created by Kamilaroi and Jerrinja woman and artist Jasmine Sarin.

