



Cancer sucks big time - Now What?

New cancer website built in response to research into the needs of young people living with cancer

Australia, 24 February 2010 - CanTeen, which has been assisting young people living with cancer for 25 years, today officially launches a new website, called *Now What*, to assist young people who have cancer, know someone close to them who has cancer or have had someone close to them die from cancer. *Now What* (www.nowwhat.org.au) provides reliable and timely information, presents support services in an accessible fashion and gives young people a forum in which to discuss and share their experiences.

Now What was built in response to research conducted by CanTeen that identified a gap in the needs of young people in getting access to relevant information.

According to CanTeen's National Research Manager, Dr Pandora Patterson: "Our research shows us that access to reliable information is a significant unmet need for these young people, for example, of the 150 young people we surveyed who have a parent with cancer, the top unmet need was "Information about the impact that cancer and treatment may have on my parent's life in the future" and this was expressed by 83 percent of the sample. Also, our results indicate that having this type of information is crucial in helping them to cope better mentally and emotionally with their experience."

Now What website has been developed by young people, for young people, with input from respected experts in cancer treatment and mental health care. *Now What* will empower young people living with cancer by helping them understand more about what they are going through, while building their confidence and helping them to gain a sense of control over their lives.

As adolescent psychologist Dr Michael Carr-Greg, PhD MAPS highlights: "Each year in Australia, thousands of young people are suddenly confronted with a cancer diagnosis either as a patient, sibling or offspring. It is difficult to put into words the overwhelming nature of this experience as - at a time when young people are learning to spread their wings - they can suddenly and unexpectedly be pulled into a frightening and often confusing world of cancer, hospitals, treatment and uncertainty.



"*Now What* is an accessible, interactive, comprehensive and compassionate guide, which gives young people living with cancer many of the essential tools they need to cope with this experience. Above all, it lets young people living with cancer know that even in their darkest hour, they are not alone."

Now What website covers everything from cancer types and treatments, to life skills and coping techniques. Young people can read stories of other young people in similar situations and understand they are not alone. Young people and health professionals can also order free resources and books to help them deal with the diagnosis.

The website will also help young people living with cancer to connect with their peers via online forums where they will be encouraged to share their experiences. The forums will be fully moderated to monitor conversations, with appropriate safety checks.

Ali, 19, states: " Mum, cancer, died. Three crazy words a young girl never wants to hear. *Now What* website is so valuable because it is a safe place for me to share my feelings and the information is trustworthy and reliable. I particularly like the forums and blogs because they allow me to interact and swap stories with other young people in similar situations. The best thing about *Now What* is that there is feedback and information from respected experts and other young people going through similar situations, which means I am getting seamless content from many sources."

As visitors to the website do not need to be CanTeen Members, its benefits will extend to the broadest possible audience (in Australia and internationally), including young people who have not previously used support services.

Now What website is truly unique. No other website exists to provide this level of information and support to young people living with cancer. *Now What* is also intended for use by health professionals, who can use it as a resource to gather information and insight into the experiences of young people living with cancer.

Media Library

- *Now What* Video - discusses the research and logic behind the website (plus reviews from *Now What* users) - <http://www.youtube.com/NowWhatwebsite>
- *Now What* screen grabs - <http://bit.ly/ckAlhg>

About CanTeen

CanTeen is the Australian Organisation for Young People Living with Cancer. CanTeen's Members are young people (12-24 year-olds) living with cancer, including cancer patients,



brothers or sisters of cancer patients and young people with a parent or primary care giver with cancer. CanTeen provides Members with a place where they can simply be young people - away from the adult dominated environment of cancer hospitals and treatment regimes. Through its camps and programs, CanTeen encourages its Members to get involved, make friends and have fun! In the words of our Members, the most effective form of support is from other young people in a similar situation, who have "been there, done that".

For more information on CanTeen please visit www.canteen.org.au

For more information on the Now What website visit www.nowwhat.org.au

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