

On September 11, 2000, one year before the World Trade Centers were attacked, I learned my first significant life lesson: never take anyone or anything for granted. I was told that my thirteen-year old brother had a life threatening illness. This news was too painful for me, eight years old at the time, to comprehend; however the experience made me into the person I am today. At a young age I was able to become a strong, positive, and faith-centered person that I know will someday help others around me. Almost daily, individuals around the world will find out that a loved one they know has cancer and the news may seem unbearable. My hopes and dreams for the future would be a cure for all cancer types and stages. However, I know that a dream like this could take awhile. As such, my goal is to create a mentoring program to at least help individuals build a network to cope with the sadness of having loved ones diagnosed with cancer. My mentoring program that I would develop would take on the task of dealing with families of cancer patients, until the day all cures for cancer are found.

The mentoring program that I would create would be called Cancer Comfort. The program that I would want to develop would help families who have a loved one living with cancer or lost a loved one to cancer. This place would be a safe place for families to come and get support from staff and other families who may be going through the same thing. The staff would consist of numerous mature and trustworthy teenagers and adults who had experience in their lives dealing with a loved one with cancer. The staff would always be on call to help each family's needs and desires, and would always make the families and patients feel comfortable and welcome. My cancer mentoring program would serve as a counseling facility, babysitting service, sports camp for all ages, and an information booth with all information about cancer. It would consist of kitchens, art and play rooms, gyms, outside fields, libraries, and nap rooms.

The program would give updates on fundraisers, all different walks and runs benefitting cancer, families and their progress, and new cancer information.

When a family sees a loved one in pain they too feel their pain. My dream would be to manage a place where families can go to seek comfort in dealing with pain or finding light in the darkest of times. I would want the staff at Cancer Comfort to lead by example, showing that they too had experienced the pain at one time, but found a positive way to deal with it by helping others. Until there is a cure, I want to provide a sanctuary for hope and comfort because hope is exactly what helped my family deal with a dark time in our lives.