



The Alliance for Childhood Cancer is bringing together its membership of more than twenty national patient advocacy groups and professional medical and scientific organizations in commemoration of National Childhood Cancer Awareness Day on September 13.

Last May, Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) and Wayne Allard (R-CO) introduced [S. Res. 563](#) designating September 13, 2008 as National Childhood Cancer Awareness Day in hopes of increasing public knowledge of childhood cancers and help make it a top public health priority. "The Alliance thanks Senators Clinton and Allard for helping to raise awareness of childhood cancer issues," stated Edwin Forman, co-chair of the Alliance for Childhood Cancer.

"National Childhood Cancer Awareness Day presents a public opportunity to highlight the issues most important to improving the lives of children with cancer as well as childhood cancer survivors including pediatric cancer drug development, research and clinical trials participation, survivorship, and palliative care," said Craig Lustig, co-chair of the Alliance for Childhood Cancer.

Senator Clinton has long been a champion of childhood cancer issues, including the recent introduction of the Childhood Cancer Survivorship Act (S. 2877). The bill, which aims to improve and enhance research and programs on cancer survivorship, was first introduced in the House of Representatives in December 2007 by Representative Hilda L. Solis (D-CA) and Representative Mary Bono (R-CA). The House bill (H.R. 4450) currently has 34 co-sponsors. The Alliance for Childhood Cancer strongly supports the Childhood Cancer Survivorship Act, and urges more Members of Congress to sign on to this important piece of legislation.

Cancer kills more children and young adults between the ages of one and 20 each year than diabetes, asthma, AIDS and cystic fibrosis, combined. However, the population of survivors of childhood cancers has grown exponentially over the years. In 1960, only four percent of children with cancer survived more than five years, but now, nearly 75 percent of the children who are diagnosed with cancer have a five-year survival rate. Children who survive cancer often face serious health concerns after their treatment for cancer is complete. Nearly two-thirds of survivors of childhood cancer will face a life-altering effect from their treatment, and one-fourth will experience serious or life threatening effects. These include neurological or cognitive effects, such as learning disabilities, cardiac or pulmonary problems, a compromised immune system, and increased risk for other cancers.

The Alliance for Childhood Cancer is currently undertaking a number of activities to advance research and policies to improve the diagnosis, treatment, care, and survivorship of children and adolescents with cancer, as well as enhance public awareness.