



PROVIDING PRACTICAL SUPPORT



When we see parents of a child with a life-limiting illness, we often don't know how best to help them. Sometimes the simplest things provide the most meaning. Here are a few ideas:

- Contact the parents at least once a week or month. Offer all the time they need to talk to you, and be respectful if they need space. Vary how you do this so it isn't seen as an item on your to-do list.
- With their permission, handle small chores around the house like laundry, cleaning, dishwashing, changing light bulbs, caring for pets, etc.
- Handle errands like shopping, taking other children to school, practices or appointments, arranging playdates or even managing a birthday party.
- Encourage self-care for parents. You can do this in many ways, like reminding them to schedule regular healthcare check-ups, buying them a new pillow to promote good sleep, or gifting time for a service like a massage, haircut or workout. Do what you think will mean the most.
- Spend quality time with them, whether it's for exercise, dinner, walking or sharing coffee.
- Give them space. Sometimes the best way of supporting parents is to leave them alone. Be sure to let them know you are available and want to be with them, but don't be offended if they turn you down. Instead, check in later to offer your support on their schedule.