

INCURABLE CANCER & MOTHERHOOD

How to prepare for when you're gone



Cards

Etsy has cute cards and hallmark often has buy one get one deals. Hobby Lobby and Michaels has card making supplies too.

Storage



Store items someplace safe and have backups when possible. Share digital files with loved ones so there is access after you die.

Author

Lindsey Kozecke, mom of 4 receiving end of life cancer care

Start early and work often

Tackling these preparations at the end is time consuming and overwhelming. Starting early can make the task manageable

Start the process by buying or making cards for milestone birthdays (13, 16, 18, 21, 25, 30). Buy or make several blank cards or cards that can be written for sentiments such as, first heartbreak, first baby, or buying a house. Milestones you will miss such as graduations are good to include as well.

1

VIDEOS

Apps like record me now make it easy with question prompts.

2

LETTERS & CARDS

Birthday cards and cards for special occasions can let your kids know you love them.

3

TREASURE CHEST

Keeping a box or chest with mementos or heirlooms can be particularly meaningful.

Sometimes writing all birthday cards at once can be easier so you don't repeat what you've written in other cards. Make a plan and tackle it bit by bit. Writing the cards is an emotional process, so take it slow and go at your own pace. When doing videos, it's helpful to do one video recording a day. Setting a time where you are alone and not distracted is important. Organize by topic, and by age group so it's easy for the children to access what is appropriate for their age. Watching a video about your thoughts on tattoos won't help an 8 year old, but may mean a lot to your 21 year old. Start collecting heirlooms and mementos early. This is a task you may have already been doing. Baby bracelets or booties, baby books, and blankets can be gathered together. Things such as jewellery or other heirlooms may need to be kept in a safe, so be sure to communicate with others where you'd like things to go. Other things to include are things you've created (art, poetry, etc.)



What do I write in the cards?

Thinking of what to write can be daunting, but careful planning can help

When writing cards to your children, be careful to consider their likes and preferences may change. I was given this advice by an adult that lost their mother at a young age. Focus on the feelings behind the sentiment, such as "I'm proud of the person I know you are today" instead of "I know you are a successful young man." This can create a pressure you don't intend. Similarly, make sure to keep the tone neutral.

Saying I know your wife is amazing, can be upsetting to a young gay man, thinking that

DON'T MAKE IT A CHORE, MAKE IT FUN!

Buying fun colored pens, listening to a podcast or music while writing, buying stickers or drawing pictures can help it feel less like a chore, and remind you of the joy you'll be bringing to your child.

they are disappointing their mother. I try to phrase things like, "I hope you find the love of your life."

"I'm proud of the person I know you are today."

For cards other than birthdays or special occasions, imagine times in your life that your mother was there with kind or wise words (or times you wish she had been), and write cards that allow you to provide a similar sentiment to your children.

