



# 2024

# ANNUAL REPORT

## b-present Foundation



# From the CEO



As the Co-Founder and CEO of b-present Foundation, my passion is fueled by my daughter Kirsten's story, her vision for change, and the many stories from adolescents and young adults (AYAs) with cancer who continue to face support challenges, feeling isolated and losing hope.

In a 2023 American Cancer Society survey of over 1,100 cancer survivors, I was struck by three key findings:

- More than half of the cancer patients felt more isolated because of their cancer diagnosis and treatment
- Friend and co-worker relationships are most likely to be impeded by cancer
- The vast majority (89%) agree it would be helpful for friends and loved ones to have training in how to best support and connect with cancer patients, and most agree their loved ones would welcome such training

At b-present, we are focused on taking these challenges and insights head-on. I am honored to work side by side with a growing team of researchers and professionals passionate and focused on improving social support for future generations of AYA cancer patients. These collaborations are vital to our programs that educate and equip the support community and care team with the resources they need to be present when it is needed most.

We are so grateful to have you—our kind-hearted and generous extended family and #SupportSquad—by our side as we experience this unfolding journey together. We have big plans for 2025, and with your help, I know we can make it the best year yet for our AYA Cancer Community.

**Abby Westerman**  
Co-Founder and CEO of b-present

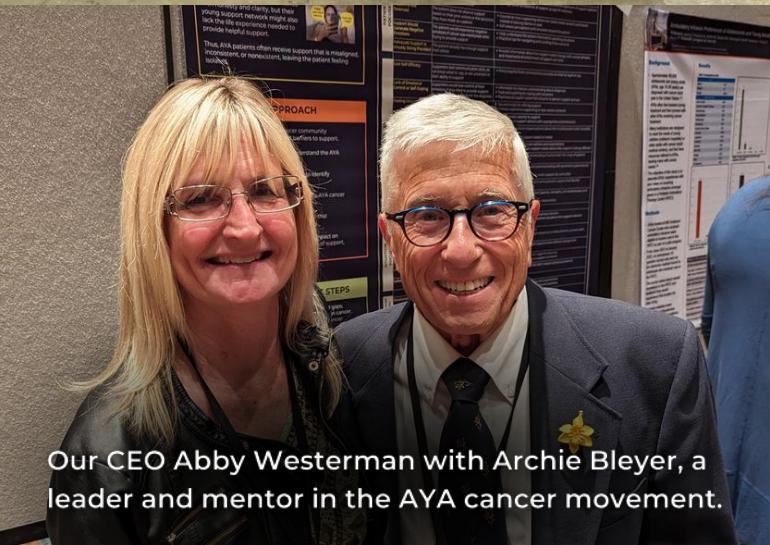


**89% of survivors agree it would be helpful for friends and loved ones to have training in how to best support and connect with cancer patients, and most agree their loved ones would welcome such training**

**b-present is focused on tackling these challenges and insights head-on.**

Source: American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

# About b-present



Our CEO Abby Westerman with Archie Bleyer, a leader and mentor in the AYA cancer movement.

## THE NEED

Nearly 85,000 adolescents and young adults (AYA) aged 15-39 are diagnosed with cancer each year, and more than 2.1 million AYA cancer survivors diagnosed currently living in the US (Source: National Cancer Institute). When young adults do not receive adequate social support, it can adversely impact their mental health, quality of life, and health outcomes. This problem is amplified because young adults called on to support don't have the life experience or the access to information and tools to help them be a good supporter.

## OUR MISSION + VISION

The mission of b-present Foundation is to improve the quality of life and health outcomes of young adults with cancer through programs that promote and strengthen connections between young adults and their communities of support. Our mission is accomplished through two key programs: **b-aware** and **b-there**.

Our vision is for every young adult diagnosed with cancer to feel connected and supported during treatment and beyond.

**Because no young adult with cancer should have to face it alone.**

# our values



## **BOLD AF**

Unconstrained by the way things have always been, we're dedicated to shifting the paradigm of what it means to show up and be present. We're unfiltered, innovative, and colorful as we boldly challenge the status quo.



## **MISSION-DRIVEN**

Our dream that every young adult with cancer feels connected and supported is at the heart of everything we do, day in and day out, as we put in the hard work to create lasting change.



## **WE GET IT(ISH)**

As supporters, we've been there, but that doesn't mean we have all the answers. We lean into the discomfort of vulnerability and the truth that we can do hard things; we know you can, too.



## **STRONGER TOGETHER**

We celebrate and value diversity and inclusiveness, maintaining a judgment-free zone for all. We are committed to ensuring our team and community are supported regardless of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, or experience.



## **B-YOURSELF**

We show up as ourselves and hold space for others to do the same. There is no "right" way to break through the uncomfortable and awkward barriers caused by a cancer diagnosis. All we can do is show up, no matter what, to b-there.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

# b-aware

Measurably improve AYA readiness to provide quality support for AYAs with cancer nationwide through research-based education on the challenges, barriers, and how-to's of social support, and ignite a community inspired, equipped, and ready to be present when they are needed most.



## 01. Understand: Research and Workshops

Through AYA Cancer Community informed research studies, focus groups, and workshops, we improve understanding and codify AYA cancer community social support experiences, challenges, barriers, and gaps. Here are a few highlights from 2024:

We received feedback from over 100 community members on our Supporter Roadmap and were thrilled to see that 100% of reviews found the Supporter Roadmap helpful. In addition, reviewers recommended including more specific examples. This feedback shaped our latest Supporter Roadmap and our new Supplemental Guidebook (digitally available).

We kicked off a new research study with our growing team of researchers. Led by UofM Dearborn, this study focuses on how social support for AYAs is assessed and addressed in a clinical setting. The goal is to develop interventions, training, and resources for the care team and establish best practices across the US.



## 02. Ignite: Education and Outreach

Through digital media, campaigns, and community education and training events, raise awareness about AYA social support trends, unique challenges, and best practices, and ignite an empathetic community of support ready & inspired to be present.

Our CEO took the published research study results on the road in 2024 to share with the community and hear their feedback. The study was shared at the Annual American Psychosocial Oncology Society (APOS) conference in New Mexico, the Patient Insight Congress in Atlanta, and CancerCon in Austin. Personal and professional stories underscored the relatability of the study findings, with many community members noting they felt encouraged, less alone, and hopeful that these findings would lead to future improved experiences.

b-present was thrilled to be invited to host a panel on Caregiver Communication, and the response from the participants was 100% positive. See our accompanying story for more on this amazing event.

Community collaborations are key to helping us create awareness, learn the latest challenges and gaps within the community, and solve problems with greater impact. We are so grateful to work with passionate and thoughtful community partners like our good friends at Elephants & Tea, Oh You're So Tough, I'm Not Done Yet Foundation, Omar's Dream, Young Adult Survivors United, Cactus Cancer Society, and We Got This.

// B-PRESENT FOUNDATION

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# Communicating with Your Child / Young Adult



Abby  
Westerr



Julianna  
Corrao



Alessandra  
Corrao



David  
Llano



Abby  
Westerr

Julianna  
Corrao

Alessandra  
Corrao

David  
Llano

Alessandra  
Corrao



David  
Llano

## YOUNG ADULT PANEL UNDERSTANDING THE AYA PERSPECTIVE

WITH JULIANNA CORRAO, ALESSANDRA CORRAO, AND DAVID LLANO

b-present was honored to be invited to Stanford's Caregiver Wellness Retreat in September 2024. Our CEO moderated a powerful panel featuring survivors, siblings, and caregivers, who shared their perspectives on the impact of cancer on family dynamics and the importance of open communication. With authenticity and vulnerability, panelists shed light on the challenges of navigating conversations during and after a diagnosis.

Key themes included preserving normalcy, fostering clear and empathetic communication, validating emotions, respecting boundaries and privacy, empowering young adults to make their own choices, prioritizing self-care, and recognizing how cancer affects siblings.

### Audience Impact:

Attendees found the discussion deeply insightful, with many parents seeing reflections of their own relationships in the panelists' experiences. One host noted that the AYA perspective can help parents better understand what children of all ages feel but struggle to express. Following the session, parents actively engaged with panelists, seeking advice on improving communication with their children and requesting additional resources to help them feel seen and supported.

This session reinforced the importance of honest, empathetic conversations within families facing AYA cancer. By amplifying real voices and shared experiences, b-present continues to empower caregivers with the tools and perspectives they need to provide meaningful support.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

# b-there

Measurably improve AYA quality of life from the point of diagnosis onward by improving communication and connection between AYAs with cancer and their communities of support, empowering supporters to be there when needed, and supporting them in their efforts.



## 01. Empower: Digital and Print Resources

Provide tools and resources to ease communication, improve connection, and improve the quality and quantity of support delivered throughout the AYA cancer experience. Assess and improve resources through community surveys.

Our Supporter Roadmap, Supplemental Guidebook, and b-there Connection and Support app continue to be vital resources for the community. Some 2024 highlights include:

- Supporter Roadmap: 10K+ print and digital copies distributed since 2021 (86 locations 28 states)
- Supplemental Guidebook and Worksheets: 250 digital and 120 print copies distributed
- b-there app: Over 165 downloads on iOS and Android devices



## 02. Support: Cards, Kits and Social Events

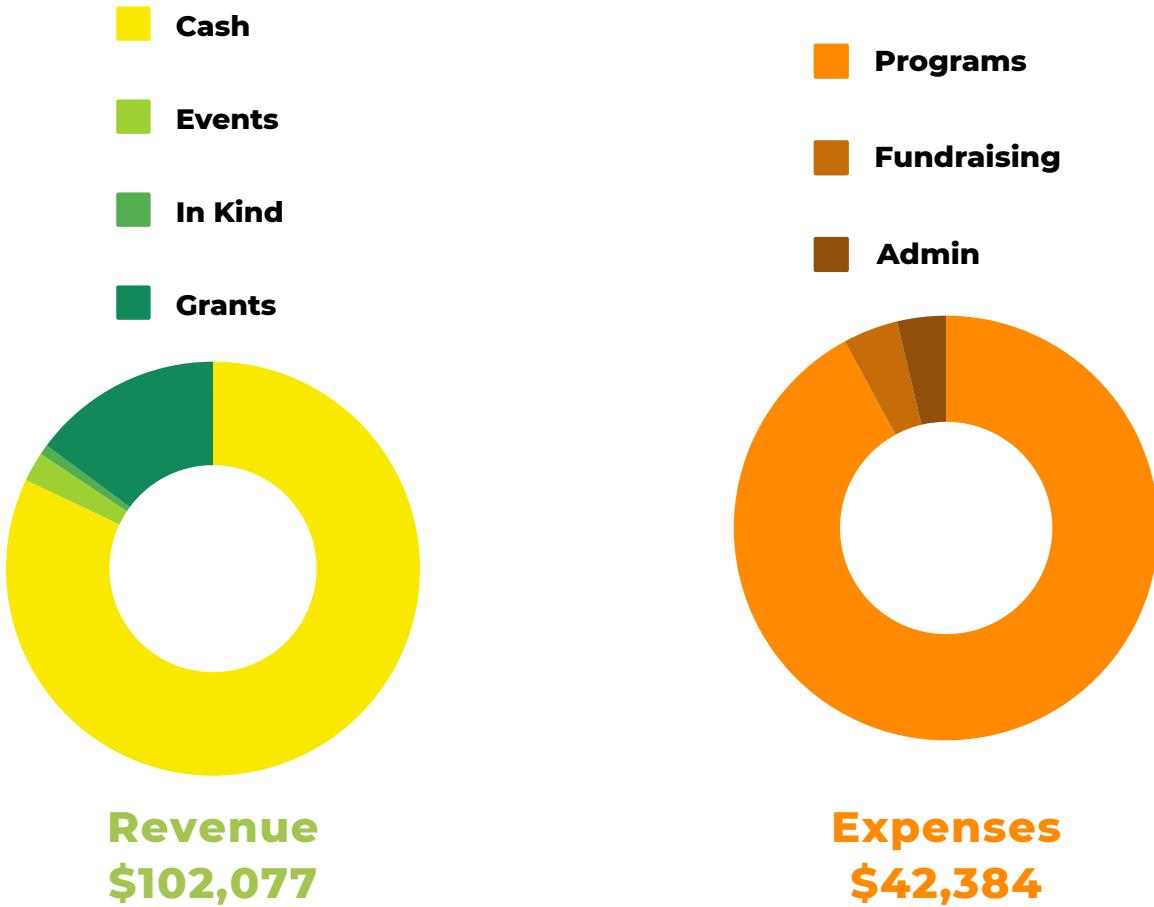
Support emergent needs, challenges, and questions from the community with instructional videos, tailor-made guides, training, mentors, and support forums.

In 2024, we provided direct support to over 200 patients and survivors through our Send a Patient a Card campaign, our new Support Starter Kit pilot program, and our Survivor Social events.

- 135 cards with personal messages of support from our community were delivered to patients in nine partner hospitals.
- 50 Support Starter Kits (25 for patients and 25 for supporters) were delivered to partner hospitals during our pilot program. Each kit contained specially curated resources and activities to empower young adult patients and supporters to stay connected, navigate cancer together, and thrive right from the start. User feedback will shape the nationwide program to launch in 2025.
- Four survivor social events to connect survivors in the region with their peers, including a happy hour, axe throwing, beach party, and a nature hike organized in partnership with *First Descents*.

# 2024 Financials

Our 2024 resources came from three areas: cash contributions (82%), grants (15%) special events (2%), and non-cash contributions (1%). Expenses were allocated as follows: general admin (4%), fundraising (4%), and programs (92%).



## Thank You!

Thanks to your generous support, we can continue to make an impact, helping adolescents and young adults with cancer feel connected and supported during treatment and beyond.

# What's Next?

## 01. Turn Study Findings into Action



Our study on social support in a clinical setting will lead to new resources and a training and mentoring pilot program in 2025. This important piece of the support puzzle will foster tailorable best practices that address patient social support needs, and improve the experience for the care team, the AYAs with cancer, and their community of support.

## 02. Distribute Support Starter Kits



Survivors and supporters shared their feedback during our Support Starter Kit pilot program in 2024. We will apply their feedback in 2025 to create an even better program to kickstart connection and support after a diagnosis. Kits will be available nationwide via our website.

## 03. Measure Social Support Impact



We are always looking for feedback on our resources and how we can improve and better serve the cancer community. In 2025, we will ramp up our efforts to measure how our b-there resources contribute to improving the experience for both patients and supporters and identify areas where we can innovate and adjust our approach.

## 04. Expand our Reach



As we scale the distribution of our new resources in 2025, we recognize we can't do it alone. In addition to cultivating our valued partnerships within the community, we recognize the need to foster new ones to expand our reach, grow our impact, and ensure more patients and supporters stay connected and feel supported from the point of diagnosis onward. Interested? Let's chat!

## 05. Engage with the Community



We remain dedicated to nurturing a culture of presence within our community through awareness and educational events. By sharing information about the importance of presence, and fostering connections among survivors, supporters, and healthcare professionals, we cultivate a shared empathy that unites and makes us stronger together.



## A look back...



