



## **Ryan's Case for Smiles Fact Sheet**

**Who We Are:** Ryan's Case for Smiles (formerly known as ConKerr Cancer) is one of the few volunteer organizations solely dedicated to helping sick children cope with the stress of life changing illnesses and injuries.

**What We Do:** We provide children with whimsical pillowcases that give them an emotional boost and remind them they are not defined by their illnesses. This simple gift provides proven stress relievers including distraction and hope that enhances the emotional well-being of the children and their families.

**Why We Began:** Cindy Kerr began making pillowcases for her son Ryan more than a decade ago to brighten up his hospital room and put a smile on his face during his cancer treatment. While Ryan is no longer with us physically, his legacy lives on in Ryan's Case for Smiles.

**What We Know:** A hospital stay can be a terrifying experience for a child. So terrifying that 20% of children who survive cancer meet the full clinical diagnosis of **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**. That's a similar rate of PTSD to all U.S. Military Veterans since the Vietnam war. The promising news is research shows trauma can be minimized and outcomes can be improved through experiences that reduce stress. While seemingly simple, a pillowcase provides seven proven stress relievers that enhance the emotional well-being of the children and their families. These stress relievers include:

1. Comfort
2. Distraction / Play
3. Choice/ Control
4. Familiarity
5. Expression
6. Connection
7. Hope

**Why We Exist:** With every stitch, every yard of fabric and every pillowcase, we get one step closer to our goal of helping kids with life changing illnesses or injuries, **feel better to heal better**.

**How Others Can Help:** We rely on volunteers and support throughout North America in the following ways:

- Sewing a pillowcase
- Donating fabric, funds, or time
- Spreading awareness about our mission
- Hosting your own pajama day at your school, camp, church group, etc.

**Our Work by the Numbers:**

- More than **120 chapters** comprised of **thousands** of volunteers
- More than **5 Million** hours of volunteer time donated
- Over **50,000 children** at over **330 hospitals** throughout North America helped annually
- More than **1 Million** Pillowcases delivered and counting
- Over \$10 Million in donated fabric and supplies
- **Value = Priceless**

**Leadership:** Cindy Kerr, President, CEO, and Founder; 120 Regional Coordinators across North America

**Founded: 2007**

*For more information on how you can get involved or to learn more visit: [www.caseforsmiles.org](http://www.caseforsmiles.org)*