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## **Moms forge unbreakable bond over their daughters' same cancer diagnosis**

By Ronnie Koenig

Receiving a cancer diagnosis for your child is a parent's worst nightmare. But when Cora Morgan, 34, learned that her daughter, Harper, 4, had acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) in November of 2016, she found unexpected support in a strange place — with a neighbor who lived close by.

It turned out that another local mother, Korinne Roberts, also had a four-year-old daughter diagnosed with the same exact type of leukemia just eight months before.



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Roberts, 30, a stay-at-home mother of four and Morgan's neighbor in the small town of Lehi, Utah, had gone through the same emotional vicissitudes when it was discovered that her daughter, Livvi, had ALL in March of 2016. Remembering how helpful it was that she had another parent to reach out to during that difficult time, she didn't hesitate to give her contact info to a mutual friend who connected her to the Morgan family. The two women started texting the very evening that Harper was diagnosed.



“Korinne sent me a message that night asking what she could do to help and shared some of her experiences with Livvi,” said Morgan. “She said that the first 30 days are the hardest and that it will feel overwhelming and impossible...It gave me a glimmer of hope. I thought, If she did this with four kids, I can too!” The mothers live just down the road from one another, and that text message was just the beginning of an unexpected virtual friendship.

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Childhood acute lymphoblastic leukemia is a type of cancer in which the bone marrow makes too many lymphocytes (a type of white blood cells). ALL is the most common form of childhood cancer. General signs and symptoms of ALL include fever and bruising, and a medical diagnosis is made based on testing blood and bone marrow. Treatment usually involves chemotherapy. According to the American Cancer Society, approximately 2,700 children are diagnosed with leukemia in the United States each year.



Having another mom who lived so close and was in the same boat helped Morgan immensely, particularly when it came to medical questions and concerns. Early on in the

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treatment process, she wondered if the way Harper was reacting to the steroids that were part of her treatment was normal.