

The Ashlyn Brysiak Family

In April of 2016, eight-year old Ashlyn was in the beginning of her first full season for travel-league soccer and was already a standout on the field. But only a few weeks into the season, her parents began to notice problems. Ashlyn was achy, cold, and always exhausted. The little girl who was known for blowing through a crowd on the field was lagging behind.

Weeks of doctor's visits and tests, showed nothing. About this same time, Ashlyn started experiencing massive pain in her legs and couldn't sleep at night. A fall from a scooter and hip flexor strain led to an MRI that gave her parents answers. Less than twenty-four hours later, Ashlyn was diagnosed with leukemia.



Ashlyn was immediately admitted to Penn State Children's Hospital. Trying to grapple with the reality that they were now "cancer parents" was hard enough, but going through the countless meetings with doctors and nurses to assess Ashlyn's situation made it overwhelming. But during all the confusion, in a meeting with the oncologist, they were presented with a point of stability as a pediatric cancer family: as long as Ashlyn was treated at Penn State Children's Hospital, their family would have the unwavering support of Four Diamonds.

Ashlyn's dad Todd says, "As a Four Diamonds family, we would be provided financial support and—most importantly—the unconditional attention of a world-class pediatric cancer facility to help our daughter fight back. When you learn that your child has cancer, the only consistency is chaos. **But as you desperately look for something positive to build upon, something to give you hope during a time when hopelessness and helplessness are the only things that feel real, for families like ours, that first glimmer of hope was Four Diamonds.**"

It has been more than twenty-seven months since Ashlyn was diagnosed, and as of August 3, 2018, she is officially cancer free. Her parents have their daughter back, and her brother once again has his best friend by his side. **None of this would have been possible without Four Diamonds and Penn State Children's Hospital. Together, they saved Ashlyn.**