

Why do I do what I do?

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When I first chose pediatric oncology for my fellowship, invariably I was asked the question “Why would you want to take care of children with cancer?” Now that my career has evolved to working with children with brain tumors, I am still asked the same question “Why do you want to take care of children with brain tumors?” I admit that I haven’t found the perfect answer, but my sincere conviction that “I take care of children with brain tumors because these children and their families let me” has been an unwavering personal motivation. These resilient children and their families, at unquestionably the most exasperating moments of their lives, choose to bestow upon all of us in our profession their trust and hope, and it is our duties and missions to provide these children the best therapies available to overcome their tumors and to shepherd the families through their trying journeys. However, hope, courage, and compassion will unlikely prevent the next child from succumbing to his/her disease, and only continued research to improve our understanding of pediatric brain tumors will eventually enable us to cure these children with only minimal physical and intellectual impairments. It is with this conviction that many of us continue our clinical and research endeavors and remain faithful that our collective contributions will inch our field toward the ultimate goal.