



FORTEe

Get strong to fight childhood cancer: An exercise intervention for children and adolescents undergoing anti-cancer treatment

H2020 – 945153

D6.6 Second patient and layman event

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Abbreviations

D	Deliverable
DOSB	Deutscher Olympischer Sport Bund (<i>German Olympic Sports Confederation</i>)
EU	European Union
FSV	Fußball- und Sportverein (<i>German football and sports club</i>)
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
H2020	Horizon 2020 (funding framework of the European Union from 2014-2020)
KKH	Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz e.V. (<i>Childhood Cancer Aid Mainz e.V.</i>)
NAOK	Netzwerk ActiveOncoKids (<i>Network ActiveOncoKids</i>)
PEOC x FORTEe	Paediatric Exercise Oncology Congress meets FORTEe
PU	Public (<i>dissemination level of this deliverable report</i>)
SWR	Südwestrundfunk (German broadcasting station)
TSC Mainz	Turn- und Sportclub Mainz (<i>German sports club</i>)
TSG	Turn- und Sportgemeinschaft (<i>German sports association</i>)
UMC-Mainz	University Medical Center Mainz
WP	Work Package
YCE	Youth Cancer Europe

1 Executive Summary

The FORTEe clinical trial is a multicentre, randomised controlled study evaluating a supervised exercise intervention in children, adolescents, and young adults affected by childhood cancer, comparing an exercise intervention with standard care. This deliverable report is part of work package 6 (WP6) “Dissemination, Exploitation, Knowledge Management” and covers the organisation, implementation, and impact of the **second and final patient and lay event** - marking the public conclusion of the EU-funded FORTEe project, for which the University Medical Center Mainz (UMC-Mainz) acted as the coordinating centre.

The event “**Kickin’ Cancer – Every Move Counts**” took place on **18 April 2026 in Mainz, Germany**, as a follow-up of the first patient event in Monza, Italy, in 2022, and was organised by **UMC-Mainz** in collaboration with the local **Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz e.V.** (KKH, *Childhood Cancer Aid Mainz e.V.* in English) and the national **Netzwerk ActiveOncoKids** (NAOK, *Network ActiveOncoKids* in English). It provided an exciting and inclusive day filled with exercises and activities for children, adolescents, and young adults affected by childhood cancer. The patient event combined adapted exercises, interactive activities, and informative sessions, while raising public awareness of the paediatric exercise oncology taking place in the EU-funded FORTEe trial.

Planning of the event began in January 2024, with public promotion launching a year in advance in April 2025. This long lead time allowed for targeted outreach, ample promotion, as well as the development of a comprehensive, accessible, and inclusive programme tailored to the needs of children, adolescents, young adults, and their families with lived experience of childhood cancer.

According to our young target group, **children, adolescents, and young adults with lived experience of childhood cancer** were invited to attend the event together with their families and friends. In addition to local and national participants (within Germany), patients and families from other FORTEe consortium countries were also invited for cross-border engagement. Furthermore, **study personnel from all participating clinical centres** across the FORTEe consortium were invited to take part in the event and connect with patients and the wider community. Invitations were also extended to **local hospital staff**, including medical professionals, exercise scientists, nurses, and administrative personnel. The event was further supported by a dedicated **team of volunteers** who assisted with organization and on-site logistics. In addition, **media representatives, exercise ambassadors**, as well as local and **national stakeholders, supporters, and sponsors** were invited to take part, increase the events impact, and contribute to the overall experience.

In total, **more than 500 participants** attended the event. The event was held under the patronage of the Mayor of Mainz, Nino Haase.

At the beginning, a child-appropriate and engaging introduction to the FORTEe project was given by **Prof. Dr. Jörg Faber**, Principal Investigator of the FORTEe clinical trial, Head of the Childhood Cancer Center Mainz and lead of the coordinating team at UMC-Mainz. He presented the goals and methodology of the FORTEe clinical trial in an accessible format suitable for both children and lay audience. The session was moderated by **Mirko Drotschmann**, a well-known science communicator whose strong reach among children and adolescents is based on his [YouTube Channel "MrWissen2Go"](#) in which he explains complex scientific and historical topics in a clear, engaging, and age-appropriate way. This makes his content particularly accessible for younger audiences and widely used in educational contexts. Warm welcoming remarks were also delivered by **Clemens Hoch**, Minister for Science and Health of Rhineland-Palatinate.

All activities throughout the day were carefully developed to be inclusive, engaging, and motivational. **Exercises and physical activity booths** were designed to be age-appropriate and adapted to children affected by cancer, prioritising participation and enjoyment over performance. Activities ranged from team games to movement workshops, giving participants an opportunity to try new physical activities

in a safe and supportive environment. An **interactive stage programme with announcements** invited all guests to actively participate in physical activities in a playful and age-appropriate setting. This hands-on segment of the event aimed to **convey the importance and feasibility of physical activity during and after cancer treatment**, in line with the FORTEe project's goals. The stage programme also included live music in form of an engaging performance by the **local band "Reno Meno"** as well as a dance flash mob by a **local dance group**, reflecting the project's core message: That movement can be safe, beneficial, and fun, even in the context of serious illness.

In summary, the 2nd patient and layman event **"Kickin' Cancer – Every Move Counts"** – an important element of FORTEe's dissemination strategy during the final year of the project – reached broad public attention, received very positive feedback from participants, and generated valuable impact beyond the duration of the event and the FORTEe project itself.

2 Description of the 2nd Patient and Laymen Event

2.1. Background and Rationale

The **FORTEe clinical trial** was a multi-centre, randomised controlled trial that aimed to evaluate the effect of a supervised exercise intervention in children, adolescents and young adults affected by childhood cancer. Study participants were randomly assigned to one of two groups: either to the **experimental group (exercise group)** receiving a supervised exercise intervention, or to a **control group receiving standard care**. This deliverable report is part of work package 6 (WP6) “Dissemination, Exploitation, Knowledge Management”. As coordinating centre of the FORTEe clinical trial, UMC-Mainz assumed responsibility for the organisation and implementation of the second and final Patient and Layman Event as well as the preparation of this deliverable.

Following the successful first FORTEe-funded Patient and Layman Event, held on 28 April 2022 in Monza, Italy, this second patient event took place on **18 April 2026 in Mainz, Germany**. The 2nd FORTEe Patient and Layman Event “**Kickin’ Cancer – Every Move Counts**” was organized by the coordinating team **UMC-Mainz** in collaboration with the local non-profit organisation **KKH** and the national **NAOK**.

A central component of FORTEe’s dissemination strategy has always been to communicate the project’s innovative approach, methods, and scientific outcomes to both the general public and the community of young people affected by childhood cancer and their families. For this second patient and layman event, the aim was to share key results and insights gained from the project in an accessible and engaging format, reaching out to the wider European community.

The event – in a way – also served as a public closing celebration of the largest Europe-wide randomized controlled trial investigating the role of physical activity and exercise during active cancer treatment in children, adolescents, and young adults. As such, it was not only an opportunity to disseminate scientific findings, but also a gesture of appreciation to all those who contributed to the success of the project, especially the patients and families who participated.

2.2 Planning and Announcement of the Event

The FORTEe-funded 2nd Patient and Layman Event was planned in Mainz, Germany, the location of the coordinating centre of the FORTEe clinical trial. As the coordinating institution, UMC-Mainz was responsible for the organisation and implementation of this second and final event, which also served as a public closing celebration of the FORTEe clinical trial. The event was organised in close collaboration with the local non-profit organisation KKH and NAOK.

In addition, the experienced **event management agency “Das Gewisse E”** played a pivotal role in the logistical planning and execution of the event. Drawing on their expertise in organising large-scale public events, “Das Gewisse E” was responsible for key aspects such as site layout, technical infrastructure, compliance with safety and legal regulations, insurance matters, and coordination of necessary permits and inspections. While the conceptual and content-related elements of the programme were developed by the FORTEe team and its partners, the professional support of “Das Gewisse E” ensured the smooth and secure realisation of the event on an operational level.

The date of the event was scheduled for **Saturday, 18 April 2026**, and was strategically aligned with two other major FORTEe milestone events that also took place in Mainz during the same week:

- 1) The **6th and final General Assembly Meeting**, held from **15-16 April 2026**
- 2) The FORTEe Consensus Conference, titled **"Paediatric Exercise Oncology Congress meets FORTEe (PEOC x FORTEe) – Bringing together Evidence and Innovation in Paediatric Exercise Oncology"**, from **16-17 April 2026**

For more detailed information regarding the conference, please refer to Deliverable Report D6.7, titled "Consensus-conference for the use of exercise training in paediatric oncology". The Deliverable Report on the 6th and final General Assembly Meeting is confidential (D1.7, only intended for evaluation by the European Commission).

Planning for the event began in January 2024, with initial discussions focusing on defining the overall concept, objectives, and target groups.

In July 2024, a kick-off meeting was held with KKH to formally present the planned event and initiate collaboration. The collaboration agreement was signed in December 2025 by both institutions, UMC-Mainz and KKH. This agreement not only formalized the partnership but also clarified shared responsibilities, enabling the joint signing of contracts and other official commitments. Following the kick-off meeting, regular follow-up meetings were scheduled every two months to coordinate responsibilities, address logistical considerations, and monitor progress on key milestones.

To support the organization and smooth execution of the event, the event management agency “Das Gewisse E” was approached, and collaboration was officially confirmed in January 2025. Their responsibilities included coordinating on-site logistics, managing vendors, scheduling activities, and ensuring compliance with all safety and regulatory requirements. From January onward, regular planning meetings were held every two weeks with representatives from KKH, UMC-Mainz, and “Das Gewisse E” to closely coordinate all operational aspects. In addition, monthly meetings were held with NAOK to provide updates and align on broader project objectives.

With the support of contacts provided by KKH and the event agency, outreach to potential donors and supporters from the region began in February 2025.

At the same time, KKH began reaching out to additional potential venues, such as schools and exercise facilities, to explore options for the planned patient day, ensuring flexibility in planning and optimal suitability for the event. In parallel, KKH initiated contact with a wide range of potential supporters to help bring the event to life. This outreach targeted not only **athletes, sport clubs, well-known local personalities, professional athletes, and former childhood cancer patients** to contribute to exercises and non-exercise activities, but also **potential donors** who could provide further financial support, as

well as influential figures who were invited to attend the patient day, including notable figures such as **the mayor and other local celebrities**. These coordinated efforts were aimed at creating a vibrant, inclusive, and memorable patient day that would inspire and engage all participants.

In February 2025, the **official title “Kicking Cancer – Every Move Counts”** of the event was finalized, a **logo was designed** (see Figure 1), and a draft of the Save-the-Date-card was created to begin promoting the upcoming patient day. Public promotion activities officially commenced in April 2025, allowing a full year for inclusive outreach and the careful development of a comprehensive, accessible programme tailored to the needs, abilities, and interests of children, adolescents, and young adults affected by childhood cancer and their families.



Figure 1. Official German (left) and English (right) version of the logo for the 2nd Patient and Layman Event named “Kickin’ Cancer – Every Move Counts”.

The promotion of the “Kickin’ Cancer - Every Move Counts” sports day was carried out through a broad and coordinated communication strategy aimed at ensuring maximum visibility and participation. Beginning in April 2025, a **bilingual digital “Save the Date” card** (in English and German; see Figure 2) was disseminated via the official FORTEe social media channels ([Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Bluesky](#)), the project website, and the communication platforms of key collaborators like the [event subpage provided by KKH](#). These included the social media accounts of KKH, NAOK, and various FORTEe partner institutions across Europe.



Figure 2. Digital version of the English Save the Date for the 2nd Patient and Layman Event named “Kickin’ Cancer – Every Move Counts”.

In parallel, a printed version of the “Save the Date” card was produced in German and distributed manually as a postcard to all German childhood cancer centres affiliated with NAOK, extending face-to-face non-digital outreach to clinical environments (see Figure 3).



Figure 3. German print version of the Save the Date for the 2nd Patient and Layman Event named “Kickin’ Cancer – Every Move Counts”.

In March 2025, the collaboration with the **Gymnasium Theresianum Mainz** (see Figure 4) was confirmed, establishing the school as the **official venue** for the patient day, which was selected due to its strategic location within the city, its extensive exercise facilities, and its sufficient capacity to accommodate various sports and exercise activities, information booths, a central meeting point, and catering services.



Figure 4. The event venue Gymnasium Theresianum Mainz hosted various activity stations and information booths during the FORTEe sports day, providing a diverse and inclusive environment for movement, interaction, and community engagement. Photo source: <https://www.theresianum-mainz.de>

Around the same time, the initial drafting of a rental agreement between UMC-Mainz and the Gymnasium Theresianum Mainz began, which was finalized and signed in December 2025, formally securing the venue as the “Kickin’ Cancer” sports day event location and enabling further contractual and logistical planning. During March and April 2025, detailed preparations were carried out, addressing key aspects such as the expected number of participants, catering arrangements through the school cafeteria, and the feasibility of implementing the on-site programme. In May 2025, a joint site visit was conducted with KKH and the event agency “Das Gewisse E”, allowing all parties to familiarize themselves with the grounds and facilities, and to begin concrete layout planning for activity stations, safety measures, and visitor flow. These steps laid the foundation for a safe, well-structured, and inclusive patient day, ensuring that all planned exercise and non-exercise activities could be delivered smoothly and in an engaging, welcoming environment for patients and their families.

Regarding the accommodation for invited children, adolescents, and young adults affected by childhood cancer and their families, KKH coordinated **special offers and discounts with various hotels, hostels, and guest houses** between September and November 2025. This effort aimed to secure

affordable options for external participants as well as enable and support families from across Europe to attend the event.

Between October and December 2025, a preliminary programme was developed to structure the day and ensure the smooth implementation of all activities. Each element was carefully incorporated into the site layout plan to optimise space usage, facilitate visitor flow, and create a safe and enjoyable environment for attendees. **Technical requirements** for the event were thoroughly reviewed and confirmed in close collaboration with the Gymnasium Theresianum staff and all participating organisations. **Catering arrangements** were also further organised, with meals provided by the Theresianum cafeteria and additional food and beverage stations organised by sponsors. A cooperation with the **local band “Reno Meno”** was initiated, who generously offered to contribute and perform live music both on stage and around the Theresianum grounds throughout the remaining day. [“Reno Meno”](#) is a British musician duo consisting of Imran and Josh, known for their versatile live performances combining rich vocal harmonies, multi-instrumental arrangements, and a repertoire spanning multiple genres and generations.

Additionally, the **guest list** for the day was finalized, featuring a distinguished group of attendees who added visibility, inspiration, and professional expertise to the event. This included **professional athletes** and **notable figures such as Mirko Drotschmann** (MrWissen2go), as well as **experts and patient advocates including Dr Jennifer Gotta, Ronja Schmölders, and Björn Hessing**. Political and public figures were also present, with **Daniel Baldy** (Representative in the German Bundestag), and **Clemens Hoch** (Minister for Science and Health of Rhineland-Palatinate) confirming their attendance, alongside other notable contributors. Their participation highlighted the broad support for paediatric exercise oncology, engaged the community, and served as an inspiring example for patients, families, and attendees alike.

The promotion of the **registration process** also began during this period. Invitees to the event included children, adolescents, and young adults affected by childhood cancer, both current patients and survivors, along with their families and friends.

A **flyer, available in both German and English** (see Figure 5), was displayed at the Childhood Cancer Centre Mainz and shared with all other participating German childhood cancer centres that had previously received the **Save-the-Date cards**, enabling them to implement similar outreach and visibility efforts for patients and families receiving inpatient care or attending outpatient follow-up visits. In addition, the flyer was also produced in poster format and displayed across the participating centres to further promote the event and maximise visibility.



Figure 5. German and English version of the Flyer announcing the start of registration processes including the expression of interest and final registration for the 2nd Patient and Layman Event named “Kickin’ Cancer – Every Move Counts”.

To promote cross-border engagement and inclusivity, **patients and families** as well as **study personnel**, including medical professionals, exercise scientists, nurses, and administrative personnel **from all participating clinical centres across the FORTEe consortium** were encouraged to attend, fostering direct exchange between the research teams and the patient community, and ensuring broad multidisciplinary representation. Therefore, a dedicated announcement email was distributed in December 2025, which included the flyer as well as detailed information on accommodation options for patients and their families attending the patient day.

To inform potential participants in a broad manner and encourage early registration, announcements were also shared through institutional communication channels and **social media platforms of FORTEe** (https://www.instagram.com/fortee_project/, Facebook, LinkedIn, Bluesky), **NAOK** (Instagram, LinkedIn, NAOK newsletter) and **KKH** (Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Website). Invitations were extended not only to current and former paediatric oncology patients and their families, but also to **surrounding paediatric oncology centres** as well as **hospitals within NAOK network**. As a public happening, the event was – of course – also open to interested people from the local community, including UMC-Mainz patients and relatives as well as staff members of UMC-Mainz. This approach aimed to create an inclusive and supportive environment in which patients, families, healthcare professionals, and members of the public could come together, raise awareness for paediatric exercise oncology, and promote social participation and exchange beyond the clinical setting.

Furthermore, **parent support organizations** associated with paediatric oncology centres across Germany were informed about the event and actively involved in its dissemination. They were provided with promotional materials such as flyers and were encouraged to share the information within their networks. In addition, support was offered to interested families regarding the organization of their travel and participation, including facilitating contacts and providing relevant

information to help families attend the event. This collaborative approach helped extend the reach of the event beyond the local region and strengthened connections with the wider paediatric oncology community.

In December 2025, the registration process was launched by the event agency “[Das Gewisse E](#)” via the [GoControl platform](#), which allows **secure, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)-conform, user-friendly collection of participant information and registration**. Initially, interested participants were invited to submit an expression of interest, which allowed the organizing team to estimate the expected number of attendees and plan capacities accordingly. This was subsequently followed by the opening of the official registration phase, enabling families, patients, and accompanying persons to complete a binding registration for the event.

Promotional activities continued throughout the lead-up to the event. Numerous posts were published across multiple social media platforms (see Figures 6 - 8), featuring content designed to engage a wide audience, including children, families, healthcare professionals, and the general public. These posts highlighted key information about the event, including its goals, activities, and inclusive nature, while actively encouraging registration and participation. This multi-channel approach significantly enhanced engagement and awareness of the event across both local and international communities.

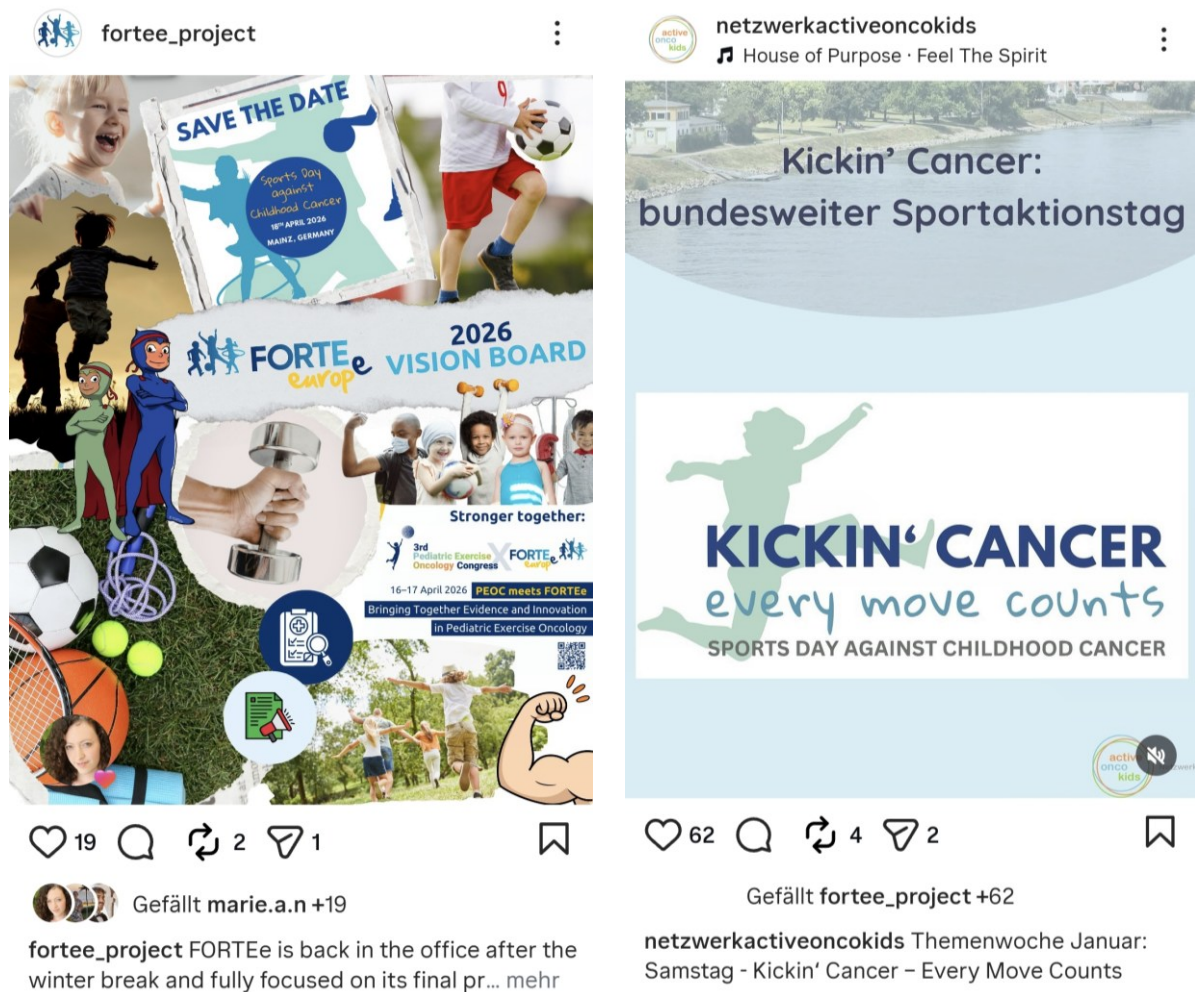


Figure 6. Extensive promotion of the event was conducted through numerous social media posts across multiple platforms. The FORTEe official social media channels (left), KKH, NAOK (right), and the social media accounts of FORTEe partner organizations actively shared information and invitations, ensuring broad visibility and engagement for the “Kickin’ Cancer – Every Move Counts” sports day.



KICKIN' CANCER
every move counts
SPORTTAG GEGEN KINDERKREBS

Samstag, 18. April 2026, 10-17 Uhr

Ein Sportfest für junge Menschen, die an Krebs erkrankt sind oder waren, deren Freund*innen und Familie

HIGHLIGHTS & PROGRAMM

Seid dabei
Jetzt
anmelden

SPORT & BEWEGUNG

every move counts
Entdeckt Sportarten wie Judo, Tennis, Leichtathletik oder Basketball.

Zirkusworkshop & Traktorspaß
Oder kommt spielerisch in Bewegung beim Zirkusmobil und Traktortourparcours.

HIGHLIGHTS

Therapiehund
Lernt die vierpfötigen Therapeuten kennen und erfährt, wie sie euch helfen können.

Bum Bum Ballerbox
Ein Sportfest in Mainz – da darf Mainz 05 nicht fehlen. Messt eure Schussgeschwindigkeit und stellt Highscores auf.

Goodie Bag
Am Einlass erwartet euch eine Tasche von GOT BAG mit kleinen Überraschungen.

Leckeres Essen
N'Eis-Eis, Burger, Crêpes, Mittagessen in der Kantine – kostenfrei für euch!

INFOS & ENTERTAINMENT

Unterhaltungsstationen
Kinderschminken, Bastelstand, Lesecke u.v.m.

Informationen und Glücksräd
Informiert euch zu Sport- und Bewegungstherapien an zahlreichen Infoständen und erdrehet euch kleine und große Gewinne am Stand der Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz.

Auf der Bühne
Live-Musik und Programm wie ein Survivor-Talk moderiert von MrWissen2go.

Elterncafé
Entspannen und sich mit anderen Mamas und Papas austauschen.

Figure 7. An Instagram post by KKH shared first insights into the diverse programme planned for the “Kickin’ Cancer – Every Move Counts” sports day on 18th April 2026.

Bewegung und Begegnung

Internationaler Sporttag gegen Kinderkrebs am 18. April / Spenden willkommen

Von Nicole Weisheit-Zenz

MAINZ. „Kickin' Cancer": So lautet der Leitsatz des internationalen Sporttags gegen Kinderkrebs am 18. April. Veranstaltungsort ist das Theresianum in Mainz, wo von 10 bis 17 Uhr bis zu 500 Teilnehmer erwartet werden. Das Angebot richtet sich in erster Linie an krebskranke Kinder und Jugendliche, ehemals Betroffene sowie deren Familien und Freunde. Organisiert wird der Tag von einer Kooperationsgemeinschaft rund um die Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz, die 2009 an der Universitätsmedizin gegründet wurde. Ihr Ziel ist es, krebskranken Kindern eine bestmögliche Behandlung zu garantieren und die Heilungschancen zu verbessern.

Im Mittelpunkt des Sporttags für Gäste aus ganz Deutschland und Europa stehen Information, Austausch und gemeinsames Erleben. Bei freiem Eintritt bietet das Programm eine große Bandbreite zum Ausprobieren, mit Sport-Stationen wie Tennis, Basketball, Judo oder Rudern. Hinzu kommen Angebote wie Kinderschminken, Zirkusworkshops oder eine Kreativ-Ecke. Die Mainzer Band „Reno Meno" sorgt für gute musikalische Unterhaltung. Infostände geben Einblicke in die Forschung und in Unterstützungsangebote. Auf der Bühne berichten ehemals Betroffene über ihre Erfahrungen, zudem bietet ein „Eltern-Café" Raum für Gespräche.

Ziel ist es, Kindern und Familien zu zeigen, wie wichtig körperliche Aktivitäten auch



Sport, Spiel und Bewegung kann positive Auswirkungen auf an Krebs erkrankte Menschen haben.

Foto: Lara Eberl/Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz

während einer Krebserkrankung sein können, für Körper und Seele. Zudem soll die Öffentlichkeit für Herausforderungen und Bedürfnisse betroffener Kinder und Jugendlicher sensibilisiert werden. Denn gemeinschaftlicher Sport kann dabei helfen, Barrieren zu überwinden. Dies belegt auch die „FORTEe"-Studie als bislang größte europaweite Untersuchung, wie Bewegung und Sport Kinder und Jugendliche während ihrer Krebsbehandlung unterstützen können. Zum Sporttag anlässlich des Studienabschlusses werden Ergebnisse präsentiert und Erfolge gefeiert.

Sport und Spiel, Bewegung und Begegnung: Diese Be-

standteile für eine gesunde Entwicklung bleiben auch im Falle einer Krebserkrankung wichtig. Ein 2011 gegründetes Sportprojekt wird daher von der Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz finanziert, für junge Patienten der Pädiatrischen Hämatologie und Onkologie, die während ihrer Behandlung auch Erschöpfung, Unsicherheit und körperliche Schwäche erleben. Angepasste Bewegungsangebote können hier hilfreich sein, um sie zur Bewegung zu motivieren und von der Erkrankung abzulenken. Das Sportprogramm unterstützt sie auch danach, bei der Rückkehr in den Alltag und um Folge-Krankheiten vorzubeugen; angeboten werden Schnuppertrainings in verschiedenen Sportarten.

Generell hat sich bei der Kinderkrebshilfe ein ganzheitlicher Ansatz bewährt, mit Ausflügen für die ganze Familie, psychosozialer Unterstützung oder Stofftier-Maskottchen als Mutmacher. Für diese und weitere Angebote, ergänzend zur Forschung auf diesem Gebiet, werden Spenden benötigt, die auf vielfältige Weise eingeworben werden können, auch durch Sportaktionen wie Spendenläufe oder Wettbewerbe. Neben Privatpersonen oder Schulklassen können Firmen und Musikgruppen einen wichtigen Beitrag leisten, etwa durch Benefizveranstaltungen.

Info/Kontakt
info@kinderkrebshilfe-mainz.de
kinderkrebshilfe-mainz.de

Figure 8. Promotion of the event was also conducted through the local newspaper "Mainzer Wochenblatt".

By February 2026, the **programme and all logistical arrangements** for the patient day were finalized. The event featured a diverse range of activities designed to engage participants of all ages. Physical activity and exercise stations included disciplines such as **judo, tennis, athletics, and basketball**, while interactive experiences such as a **circus workshop, face painting, a creative corner, a reading corner, and a photo booth** offered additional opportunities for fun and creativity. **Therapy dogs** were present to provide comfort and engagement during the sports day while also raising awareness about the supportive and beneficial role of therapy dogs during and after childhood cancer treatment. Additionally, the **"Boom Boom Baller Box"** from Germany's first league **football club 1. FSV Mainz 05** offered participants an entertaining and interactive opportunity to test the speed of their shots.

The stage programme included a **flash mob performed by a professional dance team** and **live music** with participatory songs by the local band Reno Meno, creating a lively and inclusive atmosphere throughout the day. Numerous **information booths** were staffed by organisations such as **NAOK, KKH, FORTEe, Pixformance, DOSB, Waldpiratencamp, Youth Cancer Europe (YCE)**, and the **"Survivor Deutschland"** information booth, providing guidance, resources, and interactive opportunities for visitors.

Catering arrangements were also finalized. In addition to the main meals provided by the Theresianum cafeteria, a variety of additional food and beverage options were organised satisfy diverse tastes and

enhance the event experience. These included **“N’Eis” ice cream, burgers, crepes, and a parents’ café**, offering casual refreshments and comfortable spaces for families to relax and socialise.

The final **personnel planning** was completed in February 2026. Additional individuals and partner organisations were recruited to supervise both physical activity and exercise stations and information booths and to assist with the numerous tasks required for smooth event operation. For the physical activity and exercise stations, **exercise scientists** from NAOK, **student assistants** from UMC-Mainz, and staff from partner organisations such as **“Turn- und Sportclub (TSC) Mainz”, “Basketball Aid”, “Samurai Kids Faust”, “Turn- und Sportgemeinschaft (TSG) Bretzenheim”, “Flip” circus workshop, “Boom Boom Baller Box” from Mainz 05**, and the **therapy dog** from the association **“Lebensfreude e.V.”** provided supervision and support.

For the information booths, personnel from **NAOK, KKH, the FORTEe team, Pixformance, DOSB, “Walddpiratencamp”, “Ipsen Stiftung” (Ipsen foundation), YCE, and “Survivor Deutschland”** were present to assist participants, answer questions, and ensure smooth operations throughout the event. In addition, UMC-Mainz, KKH, and NAOK staff provided overarching support at exercise and physical activity stations and information booths, ensuring that the event ran seamlessly.

This comprehensive planning of programme, catering, and personnel created a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment for all attendees, allowing patients, families, healthcare professionals, and members of the public to participate fully and enjoy the day. In early March, a final walkthrough of the Theresianum was conducted together with representatives from **“Das Gewisse E!”**, the safety officers, KKH, the Theresianum management, and the responsible coordinators of UMC-Mainz. During this walkthrough, all remaining details were reviewed, final arrangements confirmed, and necessary adjustments implemented to ensure the smooth execution of the event.

The final agenda of the **“Kickin’ Cancer”** sports day can be found in Figure 9.

PROGRAMM		
10:00 Uhr	Beginn der Aktivitäten Alle Stationen sind geöffnet, viel Spaß beim Entdecken!	
11:00 Uhr	Auftritt Reno Meno Offizielle Eröffnung	Bühne
11:45 Uhr	Moderierter „Survivor“-Talk zum Thema Sport und Bewegung mit Dr. Jennifer Gotta, Ronja Schmölders, Björn Hessing Anja Pflüger und Luka Jüttner	Bühne
12:30 bis 14:00 Uhr	Warmes Mittagessen	Mensa
17:00 Uhr	Ende der Veranstaltung	
Unterstützt von www.engelswerk-werbung.de		

Figure 9. Final agenda of the Kickin’ Cancer sports day.

2.2. Execution of the Event

The day commenced with a **child-appropriate, engaging opening session**, including a warm welcome and a formal expression of gratitude to all patients, families, and contributors who made the event possible and who have significantly contributed to the success of the FORTEe trial and the establishment of exercise-based therapy for children, adolescents, and young adults affected by childhood cancer in Mainz since 2010. The opening segment was **moderated by Mirko Drotschmann**, who guided the programme and ensured a structured and engaging flow of the stage activities.

The stage programme began with **live music and participatory songs by “Reno Meno”** (see Figure 10), who presented a series of interactive sing-along songs that actively encouraged dancing and immediate audience participation, thereby setting an energetic and inclusive tone for the event. This was followed by the **official welcome address delivered by Prof Dr Jörg Faber**, Principal Investigator of the FORTEe clinical trial, Head of the Childhood Cancer Center Mainz and lead of the coordinating team at UMC-Mainz, who expressed gratitude to all participating families, patients, partners, and supporters (see Figure 11).

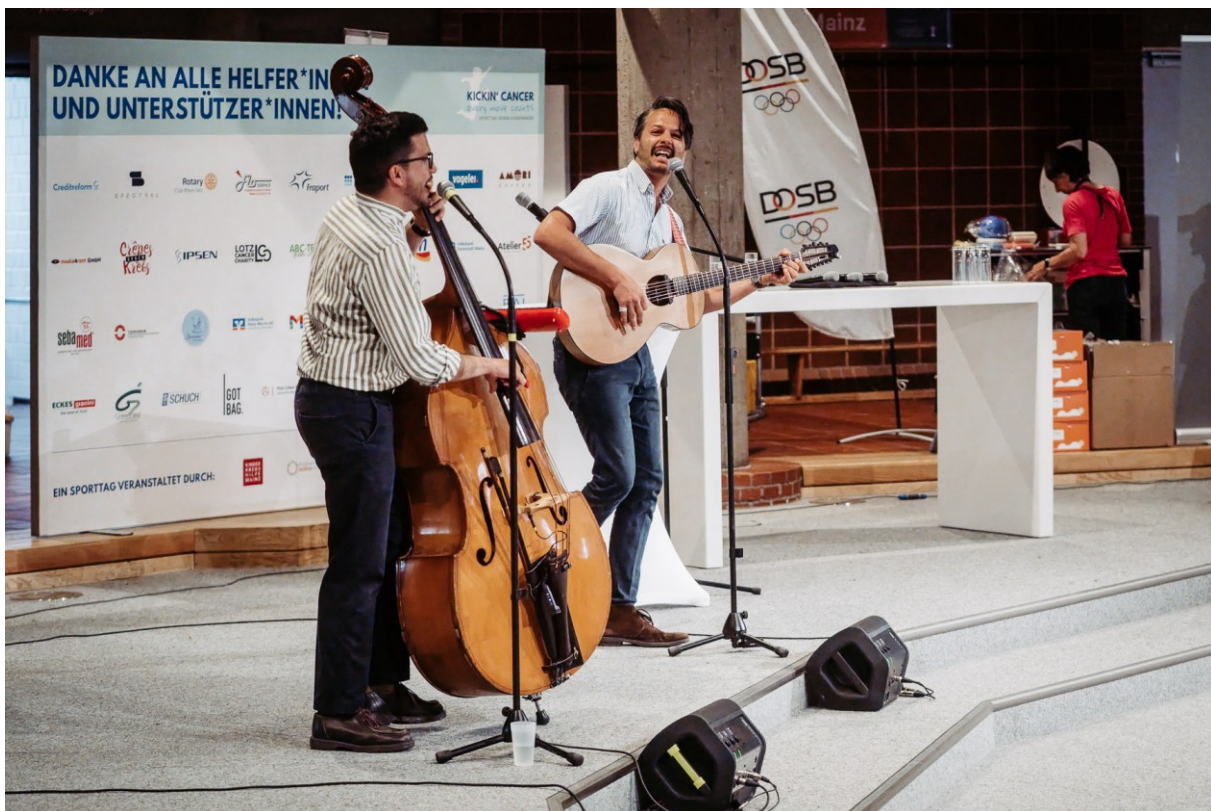


Figure 10. The local band “Reno Meno” opened the FORTEe sports day with an energetic live performance, creating a joyful atmosphere and getting participants throughout the venue dancing and moving together.



Figure 11. Opening ceremony of the FORTEe sports day, featuring welcoming remarks and an accessible introduction to the trial by Prof. Dr. Jörg Faber, principal investigator of the FORTEe trial and coordinator of the FORTEe project. The presentation set an inclusive and encouraging tone for the event, which was dedicated to children, adolescents, and young adults affected by childhood cancer.

Subsequently, **Clemens Hoch** (Minister for Science and Health of the State of Rhineland-Palatinate) delivered a further formal address, contributing additional institutional and contextual perspectives to the event (see Figure 12). Thereafter, the programme returned to the stage moderator Mirko Drotschmann, who continued guiding the audience through the next segment of the event.

In a dynamic and playful transition, he was symbolically “removed from the stage” by a dance group, which then initiated a **high-energy flash mob**, actively involving all attendees and transforming the stage area into a collective movement and dance experience (see Figure 13).



Figure 12. Clemens Hoch, Minister of Science and Health of Rhineland-Palatinate and guest of honour of the event, delivering his welcome address during the opening ceremony of the FORTEe sports day.



Figure 13. *An interactive dance flash mob on stage brought participants into motion together, creating an energetic start to the wide range of exercise- and activity-stations offered throughout the sports day.*

Following the opening ceremony, participants were invited to transition into the **active programme** across the grounds of the Theresianum site, where a wide range of physical activity and exercise stations were available (described in detail below).

Alternatively, attendees had the opportunity to remain for a **moderated on-stage interview format featuring Mirko Drotschmann** in conversation with guest speakers Jennifer Gotta, Ronja Schmölders, and Björn Hessing (see Figure 14). During this session, the guests shared **personal lived experiences** related to cancer, physical activity, and exercise, thereby providing authentic, motivational, and empowering perspectives for patients, families, and the wider audience.



Figure 14. Moderated on-stage interview hosted by Mirko Drotschmann (MrWissen2go) together with guest speakers Jennifer Gotta, Ronja Schmölders, and Björn Hessing, sharing personal lived experiences and perspectives on cancer, physical activity, and the role of exercises and different sports in coping, recovery, and everyday life.

The subsequent programme included a broad range of **exercise- and activity-stations** located across the outdoor courtyard, the sports field, and the indoor gymnasium. These stations offered diverse, sport-specific activities developed in collaboration with local sports organisations and professional athletes (see Figure 16). Exercise professionals from the Childhood Cancer Centre of UMC-Mainz as well as from NAOK guided participants through various challenges, including standing long jump, reaction time testing, rowing tasks, and other playful physical activities. Participants were encouraged to explore their individual physical capacities by setting personal bests in a supportive and motivating environment.

Upon arrival, all **participating children received a sports bag** containing a drinking bottle and additional useful materials for the sports day, together with an **individual activity passport** (see Figure 15) listing all available stations and activities. At each station, participants could collect stamps for successful participation, creating an engaging and motivating framework that encouraged children and adolescents to actively explore the full range of activities. At the end of the event, completed activity passports could be exchanged for a small prize, further enhancing enjoyment of one's achievements and activities during the sports day.



Figure 15. The activity passport led all participants through the day and motivated everybody to collect stamps in participating in various exercises.

Additional activity formats included a **dance workshop** led by a professional dance company, providing opportunities for creative expression and body awareness. The professional football club 1. FSV Mainz 05 contributed interactive stations such as the **“Boom Boom Baller Box”** and a **goal wall shooting challenge**, enabling participants to engage in football-related activities in a playful and inclusive setting. Local **track and field athletes** facilitated an athletics station, while the **martial arts club “Samurai Kids Faust”** offered introductory workshops allowing participants to explore martial arts disciplines. Furthermore, the **“Flip” circus workshop** provided a wide range of materials and guidance for children, adolescents, and young adults to experiment with circus arts and develop creative movement skills, while simultaneously encouraging physical activity, movement confidence, and active participation.



Figure 16. Visitors enjoying various interactive activities, exercises, and sport stations during the FORTEe Sports Day event.

In addition to the structured physical activity and exercise stations, a range of **complementary and inclusive offers** were available throughout the day, designed to accommodate diverse interests and needs (see Figure 17). A dedicated **reading corner** provided a **calm and supportive environment for storytelling and relaxation**. **Face painting** and a **photo booth** allowed participants to express creativity and capture memorable moments of the event. An **arts and crafts area** offered hands-on activities for children and siblings, creating an inclusive space for creative engagement and participation in the event beyond the sport stations and physical exercises. Collectively, these activities contributed to the inclusive character of the event and ensured accessibility and engagement for all attendees.



Figure 17. Complementary recreational activities during the FORTEe sports day included a reading corner, face painting, a photo booth, creative arts and crafts stations, and friendly therapy dogs inviting participants to cuddle and interact. Together, these inclusive and engaging activities created a welcoming, joyful, and family-oriented atmosphere for all attendees throughout the event.

Concurrently, an **exhibition area** was established featuring **informational booths** from key stakeholders and partner organisations, including NAOK, YCE, Pixformance, the FORTEe project consortium, and other relevant institutions in the field of paediatric oncology and exercise oncology (see Figure 18). These booths provided educational materials on the benefits of physical activity during and after cancer treatment and facilitated direct exchange between participants, experts, and peers.



Figure 18. Comprehensive exhibition area showcasing a variety of informational booths on physical activity during and after childhood cancer treatment.

Throughout the entire event, **local catering services and food trucks** ensured continuous availability of refreshments, including cold beverages and complimentary ice cream. This provision supported participant well-being and hydration while also creating informal spaces for rest, social interaction, and networking among patients, families, healthcare professionals, researchers, volunteers, and other stakeholders.

3 Audience and Number of Attendees

In total, the event welcomed **more than 500 participants** from Germany and around the world e.g. France, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom, Slovenia, Romania, Australia, Canada, and Brazil. Thereof, around **380 participants**, including approximately **190 children** and **190 adults**, reflected its strong family-oriented and inclusive character. In addition, around **122 staff members and volunteers** supported the implementation of the programme, ensuring the smooth organisation and delivery of all activities across the venue.

The event was further enriched by the presence of around distinguished guests of honour, including political and public figures such as **Clemens Hoch** (Minister for Science and Health of the State of Rhineland-Palatinate) and **Daniel Baldy** (Representative in the German Bundestag), as well as **professional athletes, experts, and patient advocates**. Among them were well-known personalities and contributors such as **Mirko Drotschmann** (MrWissen2go), **Dr Jennifer Gotta**, **Ronja Schmölders**, and **Björn Hensing**, highlighting the strong societal, scientific, and public engagement surrounding the initiative.

It was additionally accompanied by media representatives, exercise ambassadors, and a range of local and national stakeholders, partners, supporters, and sponsors, underlining the broad visibility and impact of the event.

4 Feedback and Impact

The “Kickin’ Cancer – Every Move Counts” sports day served as a public “closing event” of the FORTEe clinical trial and symbolically **marked the successful culmination of the project**. With its strong focus on children, adolescents, and young adults affected by childhood cancer and their families, the event translated the scientific achievements of the FORTEe study into a practical, inclusive, and celebratory experience, creating visibility for its findings and reinforcing its patient-centred approach.

The FORTEe project aimed to evaluate and implement a supervised exercise intervention in paediatric oncology and to establish physical activity as an evidence-based component of standard cancer care for children and adolescents. The sports day highlighted how the FORTEe team pursued and communicated these goals, presented key results, and showcasing how motivating exercise can be when integrated into the setting of childhood cancer care.

The event was widely regarded by partners, participants, and stakeholders as a meaningful conclusion to the FORTEe trial and as a powerful tribute to the contribution of all children, adolescents, and young adults affected by childhood cancer and their families who made this research possible.

Press coverage and public engagement reflected a strong resonance of the event. Multiple local and national media outlets reported on the sports day, complemented by a **television feature by Südwestrundfunk** (SWR; a public broadcasting organisation, providing regional television, radio, and digital media coverage across the southwest of Germany), which provided insights into the event, including **perspectives from patients** as well as **interviews with Lara Eberl** (Deputy Head of Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz e.V.) and **Prof Dr Jörg Faber** (Childhood Cancer Centre of UMC-Mainz and Chair of Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz e.V.).

In addition, **numerous social media posts** across FORTEe’s official channels, as well as those of partner organisations, KKH, and NAOK, achieved **broad outreach and coverage**. Alongside various posts highlighting the success of the “Kickin’ Cancer – Every move counts!” sports day, several **press releases** summarising the event were disseminated to national and local media by KKH and NAOK shortly after the event in April 2026 (see Figure 19 - 25).

Overall, the coordinated promotional efforts and documentation ensured high visibility, encouraged public dialogue, and strengthened awareness for paediatric exercise oncology among families, professionals, and the general public alike.

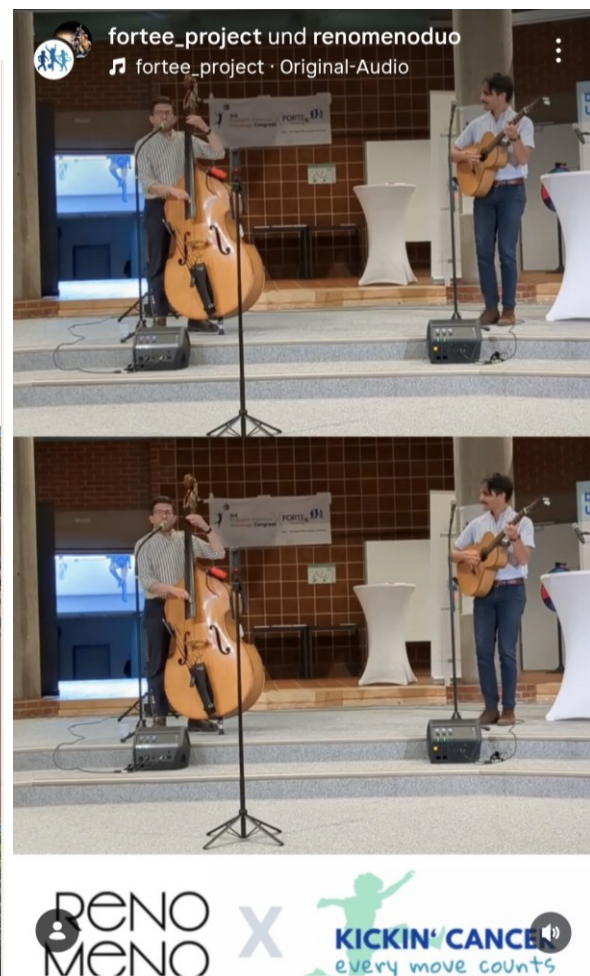


Figure 19. Social media outreach, including posts via the FORTEe Instagram channel, highlighted the success and vibrant atmosphere of the “Kickin’ Cancer – Every Move Counts” sports day. A special highlight of the event was the live performance by the local band “Reno Meno”, whose interactive music programme created an uplifting atmosphere and encouraged children, families, and guests to actively participate and dance together.

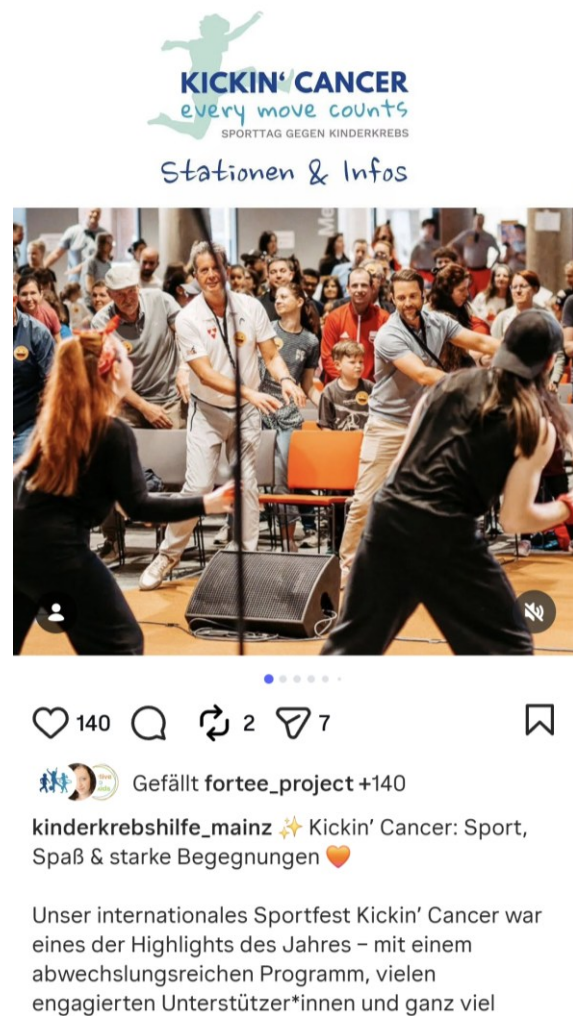


Figure 20. Social media posts shared by KKH captured the positive atmosphere and strong engagement throughout the “Kickin’ Cancer – Every Move Counts” sports day, showcasing participants enjoying various exercises and recreational activities.



„Kickin' Cancer – every move counts“: Internationales Sportfest gegen Kinderkrebs versammelt über 500 Menschen in Mainz

28. April 2026 / von Lara Eberl

Bewegung, Begegnung und Gemeinschaft standen am Samstag, den 18. April, im Fokus

Figure 21. Post-event press coverage on KKH website highlighted the large number of visitors and the strong public resonance of the event in the weeks following the sports day. The online dissemination further increased the visibility of the initiative and contributed to raising awareness for the importance of exercise in paediatric oncology among the broader public.



Figure 22. The Ministry of Science and Health Rhineland-Palatinate shared impressions after the event via their social media channels (left: Instagram, right: LinkedIn), thus increasing the impact and outreach of the childhood cancer sports day.



Figure 23. Post-event social media coverage by participants of the PEOC x FORTEe congress and the Kickin' Cancer sports day.

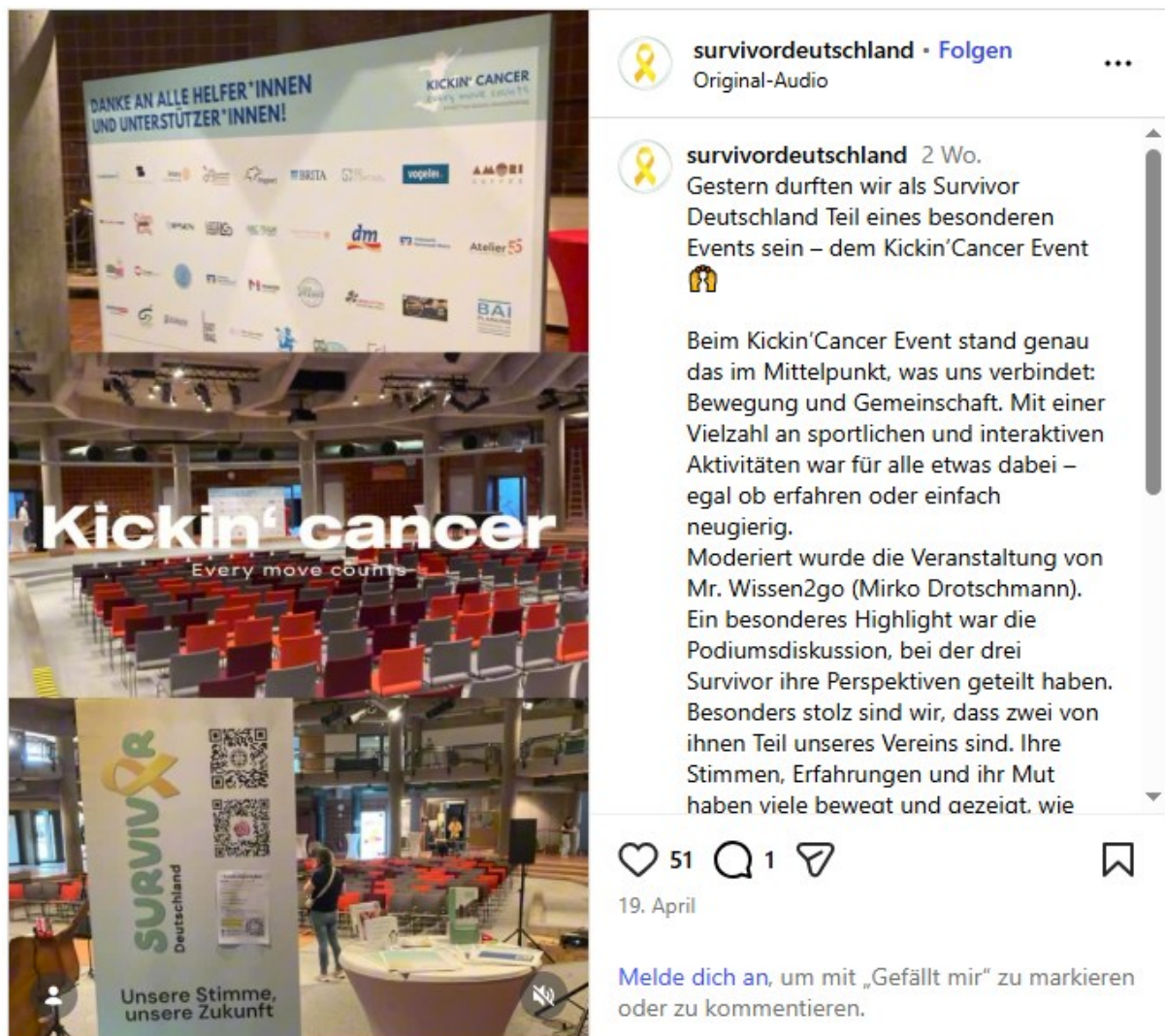


Figure 24. “Survivor Deutschland” reported with a short video and explanation on the “Kickin’ Cancer” sports day on Instagram.

Den Abschluss bildete der internationale Sporttag „Kickin’ Cancer“, bei dem rund 500 Gäste an zahlreichen Stationen verschiedene Sportangebote ausprobieren und sich an Infoständen informieren konnten. Zum sportlichen Programm gehörten unter anderem Tennis, Rudern, Basketball, eine Torschusswand sowie Leichtathletik.

Auch die Infostände waren vielfältig besetzt, darunter das Waldpiraten-Camp (<https://www.kinderkrebsstiftung.de/wir-helfen/leben-nach-der-behandlung/waldpiraten-camp/>), Survivor Deutschland e.V. (<https://survivordeutschland.de/>), die Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz (<https://www.kinderkrebshilfe-mainz.de/>) und das NAOK. Ausgerichtet wurde die Veranstaltung von der Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz, DORRE, der Unimedizin Mainz und dem NAOK.

Darüber hinaus gab es kreative Angebote, therapeutische Stationen sowie eine Leseecke. Eines der Highlights war der Survivor Talk, moderiert von Mirko Troschmann. Ronja Molik, Jennifer Gotta und Jörn Hessing berichteten eindrucksvoll von ihrem Weg im Sport und luden zum offenen Austausch ein.



Figure 25. The NAOK team, alongside several patients, spent four impactful days in Mainz, attending the “Kickin’ Cancer” sports day, the final FORTEe General Assembly Meeting, and the PEOC x FORTEe Conference 2026, strengthening collaboration and celebrating progress in paediatric oncology and exercise medicine.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, FORTEe's 2nd Patient and Layman Event "Kickin' Cancer – Every Move Count" was a full success, and the consortium is excited about the fantastic attendance, the positive feedback from participants, and the widespread resonance and impact across social media and classic media outlets. As the concluding landmark of the FORTEe clinical trial, the event effectively combined scientific dissemination with community engagement, expressing deep gratitude to all patients, families, and contributors involved in the project.

The event highlighted the relevance of personalised exercise during and after cancer treatment and made key findings accessible to a broad audience. Strong media coverage and widespread social media engagement further amplified the event's outreach and impact, reinforcing its role in raising awareness for paediatric exercise oncology across Europe.

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