

Center Highlights

FALL 2007



From the Directors ~

“The only constant is change.” That is a quote that hangs on a bulletin board in our building. It is a daily reminder for all- bereaved or not, that life is in motion and we are swept along with it. As we begin our new fiscal year at the Center, change is evident. In order to step up our efforts in fundraising, which for most non-profits is vital to their survival, we are reorganizing our roles.

Starting this past July, Christine Smith, one of the founding directors, has been overseeing all aspects of our fundraising needs along with Beth Douglass, our Community Outreach and Development person. Christine will continue to work with our amazing committee to create new ideas for current and future events. In addition, she will continue the outreach to donors for our annual drive campaign. We are excited that she will be able to utilize her interests and talents in this way. As a result of this change, Shirley Elrod, the other founding director, will oversee the administrative needs of the Center in the role of Executive Director. Lois Harris and Emily Vincent are both moving to new positions as Program Director and Clinical Director, accordingly. Mary Flenders will be the Nello’s Corner Coordinator and Beth Douglass will handle a dual role as the Center Development and Camp Millie Coordinator. For a complete and updated list of staff names and contact information, please see the back page of the newsletter.

Each decision we make considers the needs of the children and adults that come to the Center and participate in our services. We are ever mindful of keeping our efforts focused on continuing the highest quality of care for those who know better than anyone that change can occur.

Shirley and Christine

Shirley and Christine
Fellows in Thanatology -
Death, Dying and Bereavement

2007 SUPPORT GROUP PROGRAM

Support groups gather individuals with similar circumstances and types of loss into a circle of support and encouragement. Groups offered are determined by the number of participants registered and are not limited to the categories listed below. Meetings are scheduled once a week for six weeks for 1¼ hours. Structure includes discussion and supportive sharing, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and hope.

- **Mature Loss of Spouse/Partner** – *For those over age 45. Afternoon and evening options are available.*
- **Younger Loss of Spouse/Partner** – *For those ages 45 and younger.*
- **Support for Suicide Loss** – *For adults who have experienced the death of a loved one by suicide.*
- **Adult Loss of a Parent** – *For adults who have experienced the death of a parent or parental figure.*
- **NEW! Motherless Daughters** - *For those who have experienced the death of a mother - as daughters, mothers and women.*
- **People in Transition** – *For adults who are experiencing a major lifestyle change or life-stressor, such as death of a loved one, job loss, life-status change.*
- **Young Adult Loss** - *For adults post high-school through late 20’s who have experienced the death of a loved one.*

There is a screening process before entering a group. A registration form and a \$60 fee for the six weeks session are required. In our experience, support groups tend to be most beneficial to a participant if at least 4 to 6 months has passed since the time of the death. This may vary due to individual circumstances.

Call 610-222-4115 to register.

Also at the Center:

Local Chapter of **Parents of Murdered Children** – *Held on the 1st Sunday of every month, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Call for contact name and number.*

We Proudly Welcome the Newest Members of our Team...

My name is Claire Drexler and I am very excited to be part of the counseling team at the Center. For almost 30 years I have been fortunate to work with individuals as they attempt to negotiate the emotional trials of coping with life-threatening illness. Through my experience in acute care, long-term care, hospice and most recently in an outpatient cancer center, I have developed a profound respect for the resilience of an individual's ability to process, experience and emerge from loss. Experiencing loss is both universal and profoundly personal. Each loss experience is unique and the same. Each and every individual trying to find their way through a loss, be it from death or loss of health, deserves the opportunity to benefit from the competent guidance of caring professionals to facilitate their healing. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the vision and mission of The Center for Loss & Bereavement and look forward to a long association.



I received a Bachelor in Social Work from Juniata College and a Master of Social Work from Temple University. I have attained Licensed Clinical Social Worker status and have Board Certified Diplomat status with the National Association of Social Workers. I have had extensive training in the field of medical ethics. I have been able to be part of the professional education of future social workers by being a Field Liaison with the West Chester University Graduate School of Social Work. Facilitating support groups including disease specific cancer support groups, care-giver groups and children's bereavement groups have been part of my entire professional life. One of my roles at the Center will be to support Nello's Corner by facilitating groups. I will also have the opportunity to help develop new programs that will be offered by the Center for clients and for professionals who are interested in expanding their knowledge of grief and bereavement.



My name is Barbara Kimball and I am absolutely delighted to be joining the Center for Loss and Bereavement as a therapist and trainer. Most of my experience as a social worker has been in healthcare. I had worked at Montgomery Hospital for ten years as a psychiatric social worker. After 18 years as Director of Social Services at Phoenixville Hospital, I decided it was time to try a new direction. Now I work part time as a hospice social worker for Grand View Hospice in Sellersville in addition to my work at the Center.

In both hospice and the acute care setting, I have developed an expertise in crisis intervention, end-of-life care, and medical decision-making. I have facilitated a number of support groups, including ones for caregivers and for those who have lost a spouse. I worked at Camp Millie this year and am hoping to work more with children and their families at Nello's Corner.

I grew up in Blue Bell and earned a BA from Ursinus College. I also have a degree in Master of Administration from West Chester and Master of Social Work from Widener University. I am a licensed clinical social worker in Pennsylvania and am also licensed in New Jersey. I am currently studying to earn a certification in Thanatology from the Association for Death Education and Counseling in the near future.

Attention College Students!

Are you a college student who loves working with children and is also studying psychology (or a related field) in college? Would you like to gain some valuable hands on experience in the bereavement field?

We are offering an opportunity for a college student to work at our four day children's bereavement camp: Camp Millie. The student would attend a few preparation meetings, work side by side with our experienced staff during the camp and then attend a "wrap up" meeting. A small stipend would be awarded upon completion of the duties.

If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact Shirley Elrod at 610-222-4110 ext. 102 or email at sje@bereavementcenter.org.



THE CENTER FOR LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

Children's Bereavement Program - Nello's Corner



It helps a lot!

What kids are saying
"AROUND THE CORNER"

We are not alone!

Children and teens come to **Nello's Corner** with energy, ideas, and thoughts they want to share about their grief journey. Various grief related activities such as circle discussion, games, crafts and the hurricane room are offered, allowing the children to express themselves in their own unique way.

Often parents and other adults express curiosity about what topics come up in group and what the children/teens actually share. This year, the children and teens had a lot to say! One topic discussed in a Middlers group (ages 10 and 11) related to support. Specifically, we asked the group what family, teachers and friends could do to help them after the death. Two common responses were "To talk about the person who died" and "To come to **Nello's Corner**". Many people are not sure what to say to someone after a death for fear of upsetting the person or becoming visibly upset themselves. It's like the "elephant" in the room. Everyone knows it's there, but they avoid talking about it. Many of the kids at **Nello's Corner**, however, say they want to talk about it or they need to talk about it. Another theme that often surfaces is the feeling of being worried. The most common response from the kids is that they worry about someone else in their family dying.

What kind of advice would the kids at the Corner give to future group participants? One group painted messages on seashells: "Feelings are your most treasured gift", "Share your feelings with people you trust and you'll feel better" and "Stay strong". The connections made between the children and the support they give each other here at the Corner is truly amazing!

Hats Off to Our Volunteers!

We treasure each and every one of our committed volunteers. They are truly the cornerstone of our children's bereavement programs! Each year, we look forward to celebrating all of our volunteers by hosting an Appreciation Night. This year proved to be very entertaining as the CLB staff sang and performed a song "Hats off to You", created just for the volunteers.



Lynda Petrolina (center), who has been a volunteer with us since the opening of Nello's Corner in Feb 2004, was honored for her years of commitment to the Center.

The children of **Nello's Corner** showed their appreciation to the volunteers through personal messages. These messages were read during the Appreciation and included some of the following: "I want to say thank you for being there to support me and helping me cope with my loss", "Thank you...for listening to each and every one of us" and "Thanks for being fun and supportive".

Nello's Corner Summer Picnic

The Center holds an annual picnic for all families (past and present) who have participated in the **Nello's Corner** Program. This year, our attendance was at an all time high, with 42 children and adults in attendance. Families were excited to catch up with those who were part of their groups. Horseshoes and shuffle board appeared to be a hit with some of the older children, while the younger ones gravitated toward the playground. At 7:00 pm, all the families gathered together in a large circle for a Memory Moment. Bubbles were blown by each person as they shared a favorite memory of their loved one. The circle was filled with bubbles, a few tears and even some laughter. A cake was provided by the Center with the inscription "Strength, Hope, Support" and enjoyed by all!



The **Nello's Corner** program will resume group meetings on Tuesday, September 18th. For registration information call 610-222-4115.

The next training for **Nello's Corner** Facilitators and **Camp Millie Buddies** is scheduled for October 12th, 13th and 20th from 9:00-4:00pm. Those interested in attending are invited to call us!



THE CENTER FOR LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

Children's Summer Camp - **Camp Millie 2007**

Swimming!

Constructing Covered Wagons!

Lassoing cattle!

Digging for Gold!

*Sound like fun? Well, for the twenty-six campers, numerous volunteers and Center's staff, **Camp Millie 2007** was a Westward Ho adventure! **Camp Millie** offers summertime support for children, ages 6-12, grieving the death of an immediate family member. Following a death, children often feel isolated and lonely. Programs such as **Camp Millie** give opportunities for kids to connect with others about what it is like to live with loss.*

The faces and words of the campers tell the story of Camp Millie 2007!

"I love everything about camp."

Western crafts had campers punching tin, rolling applesauce cut outs, making rattlesnakes and crafting checkerboards. Our games were created with the wild west in mind- sack races, horseshoes and rattlesnake tosses. Snacks, lunch and swimming filled in our very busy daily schedule.



"It helped (my grand daughter) open up about her mother's death."

Campers met daily in small circles to discuss stories, feelings and challenges since the death of their family member. The safety of sharing increased as the week proceeded, with campers learning to trust themselves, their Buddies and each other as they gave and received support.

A local quilting group donated handcrafted pillow covers (and the pillows) for our campers to decorate throughout the week with memories of the person who had died. The campers were very proud of their creations. Thank you to **Pat Clayton, Betty Miller, Bettie Lou Neal, Kathy Dettore and Kathleen Zawacki for their generosity.** Appreciation for other behind-the-scenes help goes to **Verna Seiler, Ginny Stone, Faye Shaw, Kim Haggert, Laurie Schanbacher and Dot Chmielewski.**



*"The counselors are so nice."
"I like how a counselor is always there...(the child) never felt alone!"*

Over twenty adults and teens participated in trainings and volunteered their time as Buddies, Craft/Game coordinators, runners, and nurses. They are truly special people. Our thanks to this year's team: **Jenny Barr, Vicky Dombrowski, Jason Elrod, Shannon Elrod, Jean Flanagan-Termine, Barbara Frankel, Sarah Lebo, Kathie Makowski, Jake Marron, Sara Moldofsky, Annie Moyer, Robb Muse, Sandra Ritchie, Jen Romano, Kathie Sheffler-Collins, Alcmena Monique White, Jessica Wills, Karen Bottger, Connie Fretz and Ruby Marchese.**



*"I wish it could be longer!"
"I didn't want it to end."*

Camp Millie is always offered for four days during the last week of June and held at the Variety Club Camp and Developmental Center in Worcester. On the last day of Camp, campers and their families watched a DVD with images from the week's activities. A copy was given to each family as a memento of a wonderful summer adventure at **Camp Millie 2007!**

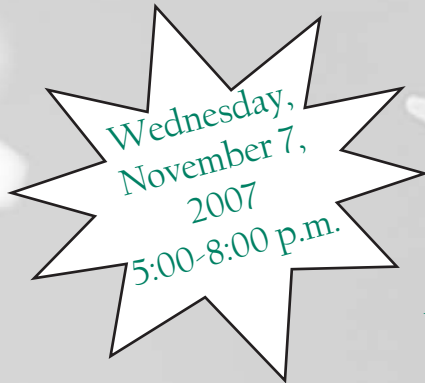


REGISTRATIONS for CAMP MILLIE 2008 – BEACH BLAST - are now being accepted. Call the Center or visit our website.

The Center for Loss and Bereavement
Announces its Fall Fundraiser Event:

*“Sparkle,
Shimmer, &
Shine with Us at Saks”*

Held at Saks Fifth Avenue
2 Bala Plaza, Bala Cynwyd



Advance Ticket Purchase: \$50.00
Ticket available at Door: \$60.00

Those attending will be treated to...

- Makeovers with spectacular cosmetic artists,
 - Wine, martinis and light appetizers,
 - Premier beauty raffles and gift bags,
- and the opportunity to start your holiday shopping!

Bring a friend and share in the fun to support
The Center for Loss and Bereavement

For additional information or to purchase tickets,
Call Beth Douglass at 610-222-4110, ext. 101



Please return this slip to: The Center for Loss and Bereavement
Attn: Beth Douglass, 3847 Skippack Pick, P.O. Box 1299, Skippack PA 19474

Yes, I plan to attend!

Tickets at \$50.00 per person = \$ _____

Sorry, I am unable to attend, but enclosed is my donation to The Center for Loss and Bereavement

Name _____ Phone _____

Board of Directors:

Christine Smith, Board President

Shirley Elrod, Executive Director

Connie Fretz

Anna Hillman

Marilyn Pennapacker

Carl Sensenig

Christopher Smith

Kathleen Thomas, Esq.

Ellen Watson

*"We can choose to throw stones
or stumble over them*



or walk over them

or build with them."

-Unknown

The Center for Loss and Bereavement

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Staff Directory:

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