

Center Highlights



From the Founders -

Does grief counseling help? That is a question that has been popping up in media coverage over the last few years. It is also a hotly discussed topic within the bereavement field as practitioners and researchers work together to determine how to best serve the grieving population. It is an accepted fact that after a death not everyone benefits from professional services. There are various reasons for this. Many individuals and families have sufficient support in addition to good communication skills within the family. Some people have anticipated the death and have done parts of their grief work prior to the death. Or, there may not have been a strong attachment to the person who died. Many people are simply very resilient. Others, regardless of these reasons, struggle in dealing with their grief which leads them to seek professional help. Unexpected deaths, a lengthy illness, a preventable death, death of a child, unaddressed prior losses, multiple deaths, a difficult relationship with the deceased - these are some examples on how grief can become more than a person can manage.

In addition, imagine when a loved one dies in a family. Everyone is grieving but the reality is no one is having the exact same experience. Oftentimes there is no energy left to attend to one another when each person is overcome by his or her own grief. Sometimes there are misunderstandings about who is grieving "right" and who is grieving "wrong." Old family dynamics can surface and create conflict. Usually families are simply reacting to fear. Grief can be scary and no one knows exactly what to do to get the family "back on track." Friends can offer great support but they do not always know what to say or do.

If you or someone you know is uncertain about seeking help for their grief, our trained staff can help them sort out the options. Some people feel relief talking about their experience through counseling; others enjoy the sharing that occurs in a support group. Many do both. We will work together to assess whether professional services might help and will let you know when we think they may not. In the meantime, we welcome the ongoing bereavement research that will guide our work in the years to come.

Shirley and Christine

Shirley Elrod, LMFT, FT

Fellow in Thanatology -

Death, Dying and Bereavement

Christine Smith, MS

Convenient Ways to Give to the Center when Holiday Shopping

- Login to **Amazon.com** through the link on our website.
- Register your club/debit/credit cards at **www.escrip.com** with our group ID50006017.



The Center receives a percentage from all purchases you make!

Honored and Grateful for the Wonderful Show of Support

Our third annual Spring Fashion Show and Luncheon Fundraiser, "Honoring the Special Women in our Lives", was another successful event held at the **RiverCrest Golf Club**, raising \$11,000 for our Center! The day kicked off with a lively cocktail reception, makeup demonstration, spectacular raffle baskets, and a silent auction. A delicious luncheon and our inspirational guest speaker, **Mrs. Jan Walbert** followed. Jan encouraged us all to look at the women around us and to value how they enrich our lives. With the death of her own mother, she showed us that even small meaningful rituals allow us to remember those dear to us.

The Talented Fundraiser Committee

Arlene Kilcoyne, Chairperson
 Carol Berardelli
 Sherry DeMito
 Connie Fretz
 Alice Gassner
 Barbara Grula
 Marilyn Pennapacker
 Lauren Rieger
 Rose Seponara

and Event Day Volunteers

Joan Bown Meg Cinelli
 Beth Hunt Alison Seponara

The Entertaining Guest Fashion Show Commentators

Ellen Watson (left) and David Roberts (right)
 pictured with Beth Douglass, Community Outreach and Development Coordinator



Fashion Show Support

Mrs. Kerry Branch and the merchants at **Philadelphia Premium Outlets** generously contributed the donation of amazing fashions for our models. Joanne Malandra was our skilled makeup artist from **Le Jardin Day Spa**. Thanks to **Mr. Alfonso Gallo** for the invaluable donation of the runway. Musical entertainment was provided by Mr. James Fields from **One 2 One Productions** and provided an upbeat tempo for our show!

Our Lovely Volunteer Models

Lillian Borzillo	Pat Keeney
Michelle Bowman	Christina Kilcoyne
Sage Bowman	Stephanie Kilcoyne
Lisa Coupe	Amanda Lojewski
Mackenzie Coupe	Joanne O'Donnell
Morgan Coupe	Caroline Smith
Sherry DeMito	Melissa Smith

and Dad Escorts

Dorney Douglass
 Brad Elrod
 Brendan Kilcoyne



Fabulous raffle baskets and silent auction items were generously donated by the following individuals & businesses:

A Gift from Nana
 Nancy & Beth Hunt
 All About Catering – Pigs and Gigs
 Padrino's Restaurant
 Barbara's Collectibles
 Parc Bistro
 Basta Pasta
 Passion Flowers
 Bay Pony Inn
 Perk Valley Pet Eatery
 Beachcomber Swim Club
 Philadelphia Phillies
 Black Lab Bistro
 Philadelphia Premium Outlets
 Body Serene Day Spa
 RiverCrest Golf Club
 Bones Grille
 Rosemary Costello

Fabulous Folks
 Shapes Salon
 Freddy Hill Farm
 Skippack Goldsmiths
 Glambition Style
 Talluto's
 Head Over Heels
 The Hill Company
 Homecoming Trunk Shows
 O & F Farms
 Hotel Fiesole
 The Wooden Duck
 Iron Hill Brewery
 Thelma and Jon Wood
 James Mario-Looks Salon
 Total Body Fitness
 Kinetix Sports Club
 Trappe Book Center

Lauren Rieger & MaryKay Lojewski
 Vito's Pizzeria
 Linda Kneeland
 Wegmann's Market
 Le Jardin Day Spa & Salon
 Weis' Market
 Lederach Tea Room
 Carol Berardelli
 Majolica
 Alice Gassner
 Manni & Peddi
 Rose Seponara
 Merrymead Farms
 Arlene Kilcoyne
 Mira Salon
 Marilyn Pennapacker



THE CENTER FOR LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

Children's Bereavement Program - Nello's Corner



We are just beginning the 2011-12 year at Nello's Corner, a support group program for children ages 4-17 who have experienced a death in the immediate family. The children's groups were filled to capacity at the close of last year with many families returning this Fall, so we expect another busy year here at the Corner. Nello's Corner groups meet every other week on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons and evenings. Registrations are now being accepted.

For more information, please contact Mary Flenders at 610-222-4115.

Prospective families who visit the Center to learn more about Nello's Corner often believe joining a group will require them to sit and talk about the death for the entire length of the group meeting. Once here, however, they quickly learn this is not the case. Although verbally sharing stories and experiences is definitely a great avenue in coping with grief, other grief-related activities are just as valuable and can tap into children's individual creativity and add a little "fun" along the way.



Winter wreaths and dream catcher crafts, as well as dress-up play are just a few of the fun activities that children utilize in sharing their grief with others at Nello's Corner

Some Nello's Corner participants share highlights from their time spent in groups:

"Playing the hiding shamrock game because it made me remember the happy things about my dad."

6-8 yr. old Group Participant

"It makes me feel I have other people to talk to when I am sad."

8-12 yr. old Group Participant

"Talking about what happens and ideas for ways to handle (is the best part)."

Pre-teen/teen Group Participant



THANK YOU!!!

Many thanks to **Dola Spering** of **Project BEAR, Inc.** and to **Bette Sorento** of **The Binky Patrol** for arranging generous donations of comfort objects for our Center's griever.

We and our clients are grateful to benefit from the missions of these other non profit organizations who support grieving families and those whose children have experienced trauma. For more information about these comfort objects or to learn about ways of supporting the Project Bear or Binky Patrol missions, please visit their websites at:

www.projectbear.us and www.binkypatrol.org.

Parents and guardians are able to see the value for their children and themselves in being part of a group.

"The projects they do to get the kids to think/talk helps at home too."

"Nello's makes talking about their feelings much easier for them."

"I would like to take this time to share my gratitude. I am thankful for group. It has helped me communicate better with my daughter. She expresses a need and genuine joy in her group, which in turns brings me joy. Perspective is a beautiful thing and I cherish that people share their grief and personal fears. I've learned that my daughter and I are not the only ones with a sad story. Group provides hope to continue to grow and learn."

Volunteers who assist with groups have also been witness to the grief work that happens at the Corner.

"I love being a part of Nello's Corner. The need for it is so great. Wonderful things are allowed to happen there. Most of the rest of the world is so awkward when it comes to death. Having a place to go for children and families where grieving and healing is allowed is huge. To know I am one of the many that help float the boat is rewarding."



WISH LIST

- Gift cards to Walmart and craft stores
- Plastic tablecloths
- Tacky glue
- Markers and crayons
- Colored chalk
- Dry erase markers
- Nerf balls
- Multi-colored card stock paper
- Pillar candles and tea lights
- Hula hoops
- Fabric paints and markers
- Dark T-shirt transfers

THANK YOU!

THE CENTER FOR LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT



Children's Summer Camp -



Try your Best



"My children deal with their grief very differently and Camp meets them where they are. They see that sharing grief does indeed 'lessen' the grief."
Parent



Believe in Yourself



"I've learned that I'm not alone; it's ok to be sad - there are other people that feel that way too."
RJ



Be Nice to Others



"I've learned that helping other kids deal with grief also helps me." Kat



Our teen campers spent part of their day helping the younger campers and facilitated our Camp closing circle.



A Blast of Hope

It may seem unusual to use the name BEACH BLAST in connection with a bereavement camp. However, seeing 48 campers arrive on the first day, loaded with bathing suits, pictures, smiles, and energy, it is clear that **Camp Millie** would be nothing short of a summertime *BLAST!* A different level of maturity is sometimes observed in children and teens who have experienced the death of a family member. They often need permission and opportunities to be silly, smile, and simply enjoy laugh-out-loud fun in a safe environment which allows them to be the kids that they are meant to be.

Amid an atmosphere of water balloons and messy crafts, feelings of isolation recede, and the campers open their grieving experiences to one another through ritual, sharing, and offering of insight. A message of hope was woven into crafts, conversations, and activities. Campers identified personal characteristics of resilience and explored strategies that may be useful in coping with loss. Supportive messages from one another were displayed along a Walk of Hope, which campers took on the last day with their Buddies, peers, and families. The footprints left on the trail will disappear in time, but the messages of hope and memories of their loved ones will be carried long after Camp ends.



A Blast was not only experienced by our campers but also by a wave of volunteers who gave tirelessly and enthusiastically both prior to and during **Camp Millie**. One volunteer offered her insight as a first time participant in the program:

*"From the start of Day One with the children honoring their loved ones, through the day's business of playing, crafting, and swimming, the campers are comfortably identifying and expressing a multitude of feelings and experiences of their grief journeys. **Camp Millie** is a seamless wonder, providing all who eagerly participate with excitement, exhaustion, and a blissful assurance of the comfort and connection that comes from a thoughtfully developed, event-filled program. I am content in knowing much good was done for all of our minds, bodies, and spirits each day at **Camp Millie!**"*

Much appreciation to our spirited **Camp Millie 2011** team: **Christina Beebe, Karen Bottger, Dot Chmielewski, Francine Cocchia, Nancy Davis, Kate Doyle, Ilissa Ducout, Diane Faulkner, Ashley Flenders, Barbara Frankel, Connie Fretz, Sarah Galea, Beth Giuliano, Alekhya Gummaregula, Carol Hale, John Harris, Nancy Hunt, Terri Lepitre, Jake Marron, Kara McQuaid, Caroline Morris, Robb Muse, Jenn Ott, Chris Pizzi, Amy Ramsey, Rob Schaefer, Alison Seponara, John Shane, Daniel Stahlberger, Katey Teece, Allison Williams,** and our much beloved therapy dog, **Clara.**

See the Support around You

"All the activities helped in different ways; the counselors helped the most because they listened and cared about what I said." Frankie



Keep on Going

"I have made new friends and found people who understand. Camp helps through the rough times, not just the summer." RJ



You can't change the wind but you can adjust your sails



Favorite parts of camp included making stepping stones, writing in sand, and just "being" with one another. Every camper went home with a special box filled with both memories and dreams.

Go...Play...Dream...

PROFESSIONAL ROUNDTABLE 2011-2012 TRAINING SERIES SCHEDULE

On **October 20, 2011** from 9-12 p.m., the Center will kick off its 2011-2012 Professional Roundtable training series with the popular training: **The ABCs of Children's Grief:K-12**. This informative small group training is centered on the needs of school age children as they learn to cope with the death of a loved one. This training is especially useful to teachers, counselors, and other professionals who work with children.

New!

Spring of 2012 will feature a new training focused on the needs of individuals facing the end of their life. **At the End of Life** is scheduled for **March 29, 2012** from 9-12 p.m. This training will focus on the challenges of end of life decision making, loss and transition from the perspective of the dying person and their caregivers.

De-Mystifying the Funeral Home Experience: Historical and Current Practices will be held **April 19, 2012** from 4-7 p.m. at the Williams Bergey-Koffel Funeral Home in Franconia. This unique collaboration with the Williams Funeral Home will feature a view of funeral practices from both historical and current perspectives as well as an in-depth behind the scenes tour of the facility.

As always, we are excited to be presenting professional trainings on these topics. Our trainings are designed for small groups in order to maximize the educational experience, so space is limited. You can find complete listings, a synopsis of content, times, and a registration form for all of our trainings on our website at www.bereavementcenter.org. Click on 'Our Programs' and then 'Grief Education'. The registration form can be downloaded and submitted with your payment. Cost is \$60 per training; those attending two different trainings will receive a discount of \$10 when registering for both.

Questions?

Contact Claire Drexler at 610 222-4110, ext. 104.

Remember we are a PA Dept. of Ed. Act 48 approved provider and an Approved Provider by the PA State Board of Social Workers, Professional Counselors, and Marriage and Family Therapists to award CEU credit.



SEASONAL ADULT SUPPORT GROUP PROGRAM

Support groups gather individuals with similar circumstances and types of loss into a circle of support and encouragement. Specific groups offered at the Center are determined by the number of participants registered (at least 6) and are not limited to the categories listed below. Groups are scheduled for six weeks unless otherwise noted.

- **Loss of Spouse or Partner** – Various groups based on age or circumstances for men and women. Afternoon and evening options are available.
- **Support for Suicide Loss** – For any adult whose life has been affected by suicide.
- **Monthly Loss of a Child** – For parents who have experienced the death of a child who was an older teen or adult.
2nd Mondays: 9/12, 10/10, 11/14, 12/12, 1/9, 2/13, 3/12, 4/16, 5/14, 6/11 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m. *not usual Monday*
- **Twice-a-month Young Adult Group** – For young men and women, ages post high school -28 years, who have experienced a significant loss.
Every other Wednesday: 9/21, 10/5, 10/19, 11/2, 11/16, 11/30, 12/14, 1/11, 1/25, 2/8, 2/22, 3/7, 3/21, 4/4, 4/18, 5/2, 5/16, 5/30, 6/13 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.

Contact Lois Harris at 610-222-4110, ext. 118 for a brochure, additional dates and times, and to register.

The following groups will be offered as interest is shown:

- **Adult Loss of a Parent**
- **Motherless Daughters**
- **Grieving a Sibling Loss**
- **Support for Caregivers**
- **Chronic Illness/Disability Support**
- **Men's Loss of Spouse Support**

Groups are facilitated by our professional staff, specially trained in the areas of grief and loss.

Board of Directors:

Christine Smith, Board President

Shirley Elrod, Executive Director

Connie Fretz, RN

Anna Hillman, CPA

Marilyn Pennapacker

Carl Sensenig

Christopher Smith

Kathleen Thomas, Esq.

Ellen Watson

SAVE THE DATE! Spring Fundraiser

May 3, 2011



The Center for Loss and Bereavement

Website: www.bereavementcenter.org

Phone (610) 222-4110 Fax (610) 222-4116

Staff Directory:

Christine Smith	Board President, Co-Founder	---	cjs@bereavementcenter.org
Shirley Elrod	Executive Director, Co-Founder	ext. 102,	sje@bereavementcenter.org
Beth Douglass	Community Outreach & Development Coordinator	ext. 101,	bad@bereavementcenter.org
Claire Drexler	Therapist	ext. 104,	csd@bereavementcenter.org
Mary Flenders	Nello's Corner Coordinator	ext. 119,	mf@bereavementcenter.org
Lois Harris	Program Director	ext. 118,	lh@bereavementcenter.org
Pat Keeney	Support Group Facilitator	ext. 120,	pak@bereavementcenter.org
Steve Keller	Therapist	ext. 105,	sk@bereavementcenter.org
Christina Larkin	Support Group Facilitator	ext. 121,	cml@bereavementcenter.org
Emily Vincent	Clinical Director, Therapist	ext. 103,	emv@bereavementcenter.org

If you wish to be removed from our newsletter, please contact Beth Douglass at 610-222-4110, x.101 or bad@bereavementcenter.org

The Center for Loss and Bereavement
3847 Skippack Pike
P.O. Box 1299
Skippack, PA 19474-1299

