



The Healing Hearts Center For Grieving Children & Families

September 2011 - March 2012

Support Groups, Workshops and Programs



Recapturing
Hope



Regional
Hospice and
Home Care
of Western Connecticut





The Healing Hearts Center for Grieving
Children & Families is a program of:

**Regional
Hospice and
Home Care**
of Western Connecticut

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Joanna DeNicola, MSW, LCSW, MPA

Bereavement Coordinator

Ellen Maron

We appreciate the generosity of all of our donors and thank them from the bottom of our hearts. We gratefully acknowledge the following who have contributed \$5,000.00 or more in annual support of our programs.

A Little Hope, Inc.
The Peter & Carmen L. Buck Foundation
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The National Institute
for Jewish Hospice



Pre-registration required, call 203.792.4422 3





Who We Are

SUPPORT HEALING HEARTS

From the beginning, Regional Hospice and Home Care of Western CT, Inc. has been committed to extending Healing Hearts programs to those in the community facing the challenges of coping with the death of a loved one. Financial support from benefactors, grants, fundraising and individuals is essential to insure our continued ability to provide these vital programs and services.

The children and family bereavement programs were established in the mid 1990s under Regional Hospice and Home Care of Western CT, Inc. The hope of having its own dedicated space was realized in 2000 with the opening of The Healing Hearts Center. The goal of helping children, teens and adults cope after the death of a loved one and supporting them while they grieve remains at the heart of our mission.

Our award-winning center, located in Danbury, provides workshops, social groups, educational/special events, and one-on-one, family and group support. The bereavement services are facilitated by professional staff and specially trained volunteers. Thanks to the generous community support the center receives, programs are available to anyone in need and open to the public.

Healing Hearts is the only program of its kind serving Western Connecticut and nearby New York. Our unique community approach earned Healing Hearts recognition as one of six national finalists for the 2009 Monroe E. Trout Premier Cares Award. Healing Hearts also received an Honorable Mention Award for the 2008 Family Caregiver Awards presented by The National Alliance for Caregiving and MetLife Foundation.

Healing Hearts is an integral part of Western Connecticut's support system. Liaisons from local schools, community service agencies, faith-based organizations, cultural centers and funeral homes, along with our Friends of Healing Hearts Committee, help us reach out to people in all areas of our community who need grief support.





Our Programs

YOU CAN HELP

Make a donation today
by visiting: www.RegionalHospiceCT.org, or mail your contribution to:

Healing Hearts,
c/o Regional Hospice
and Home Care
405 Main Street
Danbury, CT 06810.

The family-friendly space of our center, the healing memorial garden and our compassionate, professionally trained facilitators create an open, welcoming environment for individuals and families to participate in our programs. Through education, peer support groups and workshops, children and families have a safe place to begin healing and understanding their feelings as they face the challenge of rebuilding their lives with meaning and hope.

Children's Programs

Children grieve differently than adults. To meet their unique needs Healing Hearts offers support groups for children ages 4 to 18 that focus on providing a safe space to express feelings about loss. While the children meet, a concurrent adult group offers support for parents and caregivers. Educational workshops addressing children's grief are available in the school and other community settings.

Volunteers

Healing Hearts would not exist without our dedicated team of volunteers. We are grateful for the many hours they contribute to make Healing Hearts an amazing refuge for the children and families that attend our programs. Volunteer group facilitators complete a professionally led training program.

To learn more about volunteering, call 203.702.7415.

Pre-registration required, call 203.792.4422 5





Healing Hearts News

Joanna DeNicola Named Program Manager

We are pleased to announce that Joanna DeNicola has been named as full time Healing Hearts program manager. In this role Joanna is overseeing the coordination and implementation of our children and family bereavement programs as well as providing supervision to the staff and professionally trained volunteer facilitators. She will be the field instructor for our BSW and MSW interns from Western Connecticut State University and Fordham University.

Prior to coming to Healing Hearts, Joanna was the program coordinator at The Den for Grieving Kids in Greenwich, CT where she worked for nine years. She earned a master's degree in social work from Fordham and a master's in public administration from New York University.

Joanna is very excited to be part of the program's planned growth and expansion. "I continue to feel privileged to do this work and I am inspired by the many children and families who cross my path as they travel their unique grief journey." Debbie Ryan, vice president of counseling services, and all of the staff at Regional Hospice and Home Care, warmly welcome Joanna.

Joanna DeNicola, MSW, LCSW, MPA is the new program manager for The Healing Hearts Center for Grieving Children & Families.





Healing Hearts News

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

Bereavement volunteers play an important role in helping those who are grieving. Through personal visits and phone calls or facilitating group meetings, bereavement volunteers provide monitoring, support and other assistance.

For more information, call our volunteer department at: 203.702.7415.

Healing Hearts Participates in National Symposium

Regional Hospice and Home Care of Western CT was pleased to be a member of the local host committee for The National Alliance For Grieving Children's annual symposium held in Boston in July 2011. This event brought together leaders and experienced bereavement professionals.

Healing Hearts Facilitator Christine Daria, MSW, presented an outstanding workshop at the symposium titled "Effective Response Strategies for Educational Staff When Grief Strikes Schools."

Dougy Center's Dr. Donna Shuurman Will Train Volunteer Facilitators

As part of Healing Hearts's new growth initiatives, Dr. Donna Schuurman will lead our annual volunteer facilitator training program in September 2011. Dr. Schuurman is an internationally recognized authority on grief and bereaved children, teens and families. She provided the original training in the late 1990s when our children's program began.

Dr. Shuurman is the National Director of the Dougy Center for Grieving Children and Families—the model that our program and 150 other programs internationally have replicated. She served eight years on the Board of Directors of the Association for Death Education and Counseling, including president. She is a member of the International Work Group on Death and Dying and serves as a Director on the board of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention NW, and is a founding director on the board of The National Association for Grieving Children.

Pre-registration required, call 203.792.4422 7





Groups for Children Teens and Young Adults

All programs are held at the Healing Hearts Center, Danbury.

Consistent Group participation is important for your success as well as the other participants. We ask you to commit to a minimum of six months active participation.

PARENT GROUPS

Groups for Parents are offered at the same time as each children's group.

1st & 3rd Tuesdays
6:00-7:30 p.m.

1st & 3rd Thursdays
6:00-7:30 p.m.

Children are not only affected by their own grief, but also by parental mourning and any accompanying changes in the family environment. While the children meet in their ageappropriate groups, a concurrent adult group offers additional support and education for parents and caregivers.

Groups for Children After Loss, age 4-young elementary

1st & 3rd Tuesdays • 6:00–7:30 p.m.

1st & 3rd Thursdays • 6:00–7:30 p.m.

Children grieve differently than adults and may not be able to put their feelings into words. Through play, physical activity and creativity, they are able to express their loss and begin to heal. A parent and caregiver group meets concurrently.

Groups for Children After Loss, middle elementary

1st & 3rd Tuesdays • 6:00–7:30 p.m.

1st & 3rd Thursdays • 6:00–7:30 p.m.

Bereavement groups can be an important tool in helping young children grieve. Activities are based on developmental understanding and provide meaningful opportunities for healing. A parent and caregiver group meets concurrently.

Groups for Children After Loss, teenagers

1st & 3rd Tuesdays • 6:00–7:30 p.m.

1st & 3rd Thursdays • 6:00–7:30 p.m.

Under ordinary circumstances, teenagers are going through many changes. Their lives become even more complex when faced with the loss of a loved one. Healing Hearts offers a safe place for teens to grieve and find comfort with their peers.





Groups for Children Teens and Young Adults

Group for When a Grandparent Dies

Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

For many children, grandparents are an integral part of the family. A child may struggle with their death as well as see the emotions their parents are feeling. This program is held regularly at Healing Hearts as a four-week curriculum.

Call for dates and times.

Group for Young Adults After Loss, ages 19-25

Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

This short-term group is supportive in nature and may have activities agreed upon by the facilitator and the group.

Meetings typically last one hour. Enrollment is ongoing.

Please call about interest.

Groups for Parents

Living With the Loss of a Child

Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

1st & 3rd Wednesdays • 6:30–8:00 p.m.

2nd & 4th Wednesdays • 1:00–2:30 p.m.

Support for parents and caregivers who have experienced the difficult loss of a child of any age.

Infant Loss Support Group

Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

2nd Monday of each month • 7:00 p.m.

Chris Mastropietro, RN

& Carolyn Wolfe, LMSW

This program is for parents who have experienced loss in pregnancy, stillbirth or early infancy.

Pre-registration required, call 203.792.4422 9





Adult Groups

In our most recent outcomes survey of adult groups at Healing Hearts 100% reported emotional issues related to grief had improved after six months of attending.

100% of survey respondents said they benefited from participation at Healing Hearts and would recommend the groups to others.

Groups For Coping With Death of a Spouse

Danbury Bereavement Group

1st & 3rd Mondays • 10:30 a.m.–12:00 noon
Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

Danbury Bereavement Group

2nd & 4th Thursdays • 12:00–1:30 p.m.
Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

Newtown Bereavement Group

Mondays, Twice Monthly • 6:00–7:30 p.m.
Newtown Congregational Church

New Fairfield Bereavement Group

1st & 3rd Wednesdays • 10:30 a.m.–12:00 noon
New Fairfield Senior Center

These are professionally facilitated bereavement support groups for adults who have lost a spouse. The goal of these groups is supportive and educational in nature, providing a safe atmosphere for sharing with others who have also experienced the death of a loved one.

Adults Coping With the Death of a Parent

Tuesdays, Twice Monthly • 12:00–1:30 p.m.
Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

This group is designed for adults who have lost their mother and/or father. The group is supportive in nature, providing a safe atmosphere for sharing with others who have experienced the death of a parent.

Ridgefield Bereavement Group

Thursdays, Twice Monthly • 7:00–8:30 p.m.
Ridgefield Crossings (Library Room)

A professionally facilitated bereavement support group for adults coping with the death of a parent, spouse or sibling. The group is supportive in nature, providing a safe atmosphere for sharing with others who have also been touched by loss.





Adult Groups

Survivors of Suicide Loss

2nd & 4th Wednesdays • 7:00–8:30 p.m.

Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

This group helps survivors connect with others who are coping with the death of a loved one from suicide and understand the powerful emotions they experience.

Please call Healing Hearts to register for all groups or programs. New participants will meet with the group facilitator before attending the first meeting.

Adult Bereavement Group - Southbury

Monday's, Sept. 26, Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

Time: 1:00 - 2:15 p.m.

The Federation, Jewish Communities of Western CT

444 Main Street North, Southbury, CT 06488

To register, call 203.792.4422 or Debby Horowitz at

The Federation 203.267.3177

Professionally facilitated bereavement support group for adults trying to cope with the death of a loved one.

Social Groups After Loss

Men's Lunch Club

Monthly, often the 3rd Monday

Various locations

This group gives men who have lost a spouse, or other significant loved one, an opportunity to meet for lunch as a large diverse group that focuses on camaraderie rather than grief. With more than 20 members, participants will find others with similar interests to share activities and outings. (Participants are responsible for lunch purchase.)

Craft Group

Mondays • 10:00–11:30 a.m.

Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

This group enjoys handiwork, such as knitting, crocheting, embroidery and other crafts. While sharing their interest in crafts, they find camaraderie with others who are experiencing loss.

Pre-registration required, call 203.792.4422 11





Workshops/Series

AWARD-WINNING EXCELLENCE

Healing Hearts continues to receive national recognition for our community approach to grief support.

Premier Inc. recognized Healing Hearts as one of six national finalists in the 2009 Monroe E. Trout Premier Cares Awards. In 2008, Healing Hearts received Honorable Mention for the 2008 Family Caregiving Awards sponsored by MetLife.

What I Need to Know About Family Grief

When Families Grieve is a Sesame Street workshop video presenting families' personal stories about coping with the death of a parent as well as strategies that help families move forward. Call for dates and times or to have the video shown at your organization. Video is also available in Spanish.

Clergy to Clergy Conversations

Group meets quarterly—all community clergy are welcome. Call for further information and dates.

Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

Conversations addressing end-of-life issues from a spiritual perspective.

Talking With Kids About Death & Grieving

Friday, December 2, 2011 • 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

When a loved one dies it may be difficult to know how to help children cope. Learn what kids need and how to talk with them about their loss.

Caring For a Loved One With a Serious Illness

Thursday, January 26, 2012 • 1:00–2:30 p.m.

Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

As anyone who has been a caregiver knows, the physical and emotional stress of caregiving can be overwhelming. Come explore and learn coping and self-care strategies in a supportive environment.

What To Do When Someone Has an Advancing Illness

Friday, March 9, 2012 • 1:00–2:30 p.m.

Healing Hearts Center, Danbury

Practical suggestions, guidance, and available community resources for those concerned about someone who has an advanced illness.





Special Events

Service of Remembrance

Monday, September 19, 2011 • 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.

Call for more information and to register.

A memorial service to remember and honor loved ones who have died. Reception immediately following.

Healing Hearts is committed to offering supportive educational programs that provide people with the tools to help heal their hearts and rebuild their lives after loss.

In Fiscal Year 2011, there were over 1,100 children visits and 1,800 adult visits to the Healing Hearts programs.

Beyond Kübler-Ross: New Perspectives on Death, Dying and Grief

Thursday, November 10, 2011

Call for location and to register: 203.792.4422

Regional Hospice and Home Care will present this premiere Hospice Foundation of America video-conference that takes a fresh look at what every clinician and professional working with the dying and their families should understand. CEU credits available.

Holidays and Grief:

It's More Than a Day...It's a Season

Thursdays, Nov. 10, 17, Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Time: 3:30 - 4:45 p.m.

The Federation, Jewish Communities of Western CT

444 Main Street North, Southbury, CT 06488

To register, call 203.792.4422 or Debby Horowitz at

The Federation 203.267.3177

Professionally facilitated group providing support and education for adults coping with grief during the holidays.

Pre-registration required, call 203.792.4422 13





Special Events

Day of Healing and Bereavement After Suicide

Saturday, November 19, 2011 • 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Call for more information and to register.

Survivors of suicide loss gather at hundreds of simultaneous healing conference sites around the world every year on International Survivors of Suicide Day. They connect with others who have survived the tragedy of suicide loss, to better understand the powerful emotions they experience. A 90-minute video from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention will be shown.

Individuals address the questions that so many bereaved survivors face: Why did this happen? How do I cope? Where can I find support? Experts on suicide share information on what we currently know about suicide and grief.

Additional Resources

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

Bereavement volunteers play an important role in helping those who are grieving. Through personal visits and phone calls or facilitating group meetings, bereavement volunteers provide monitoring, support and other assistance.

For more information, call our volunteer department at: 203.702.7415.

Individual Bereavement Counseling - Support is available for families of Regional Hospice and Home Care patients.

Community Bereavement - We are available to help schools, businesses and other organizations who experience a loss.

Grief & Loss Lending Library - Includes more than 900 books and videos about grief and loss.

Referrals Related to Loss - A list of licensed professionals that complement our own. Call for assistance.

Memorial Bricks - Engraved bricks are available for our Healing Garden that was designed as a special place to find comfort in nature. Memorial bricks are a beautiful way to honor your loved one. Bricks include three lines of text.

For more information, call 203.702.7417.

H.E.A.R.T. Liaisons - Hospice/Healing Hearts Education and Referral Team liaisons are people in our community who help Regional Hospice and Home Care be responsive to the needs of grieving people in the communities we serve.





Inservice Programs

EXPERT PROGRAMS

Our professional staff are available for inservice training on grief and related topics or to speak at meetings of social service groups, faith-based organizations, schools and other community groups.

For more information or to request a speaker, call 203.792.4422.

Helping Caregivers When a Loved One is Seriously Ill

Caregivers of seriously ill loved ones may feel burdened, isolated or overwhelmed. Find out more about how to help and support families as well as patients.

Bereavement Care: How to Help Staff Who are Grieving

When a resident of an assisted living or skilled nursing facility dies it may be difficult to cope. This program will share ways to help staff honor and remember the special people in their lives. Can be adapted to other organizations and settings such as faith communities, schools and other community groups.

Hospice Medicare Benefit: Covered Benefits and Services

Learn about the care and services provided for patients who are eligible for the Medicare Hospice Benefit.

When a Parent is Ill

The impact on children and adolescents, assessment and practical interventions. This is an inservice particularly for school and other professionals who work with children. Can be adapted to various settings.

Regional Hospice & Home Care: Programs & Services

Learn more about how Regional Hospice and Home Care's programs and services can help patients and families.

Healing Hearts: Programs & Services

Learn more about our award-winning bereavement program offered to anyone in our community.

When Families Grieve: Video and Discussion

Healing Hearts staff will facilitate discussion. Can be held for kids ages 5 to 17 as well as parents, guardians or adults who work with kids. (offered in English or Spanish)

Pre-registration required, call 203.792.4422 15





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