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HALIFAX HEALTH
HOSPICE

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BeginAgain
CHILDREN'S GRIEF CENTER

A Program of Halifax Health - Hospice

Summer 2021

Quarterly Grief Newsletter



Program Updates

>> **Virtual groups continue!!!**
BeginAgain Groups are being held via ZOOM twice a month!

>>Video/Phone **telehealth continues to be available** for individual and family sessions! Please call your local BeginAgain Counselor to set up your next appointment. Contact info listed below.

>> **IN-PERSON Summer Art Camp coming up July 27 at The HUB on Canal in NSB. Contact your BeginAgain Counselor for registration form!**

Summertime Sadness

Does Grief Get a Summer Break?

Summer is here, school is out, sun is up, and the ocean is calling. Seems like that would be the perfect combination for good feelings and better days. But, for those grieving a loved one, seasonal transitions can be very triggering for many reasons. Grief can feel heightened in the summer months for children/teens who ordinarily describe this time of year as carefree since they have a break from academics. Not only are families feeling the weight of missing this special person but, they are also mourning the activities that were anticipated and shared during this time of year. Families whom had a loved one die, especially a parent or caregiver, can experience another new loss as they are planning out summer activities and supervision for kids in a different way than ever before. Some family traditions like vacations or day trips may have to be adjusted, postponed, or cancelled completely. The non-stop media marketing of activities for picture-perfect families can also add to the painful reminders grievers face at every turn.

If your days are not feeling as sunny despite the weather, please know this is normal. After the death of a loved one (trauma), research shows the brain physically changes, that it will never think or feel the exact way it did before they died. Our brain is working on overtime trying to piece all these changes together again, an attempt to make some sense out of tragedy. Grieving takes up a lot of time and energy, so if there's anything worth taking a break from during this summer, it's expectations. We can honor this moment for exactly what it is: different than we ever thought it would be. You'll find more specific tips for summer grief on the next page.

"At the blueness of the
skies and in the warmth
of summer, we
remember them"

RABBIS SYLVAN KAMENS
/ JACK RIEMER

REMEMBER
THE PEOPLE WE LOST.

SUPPORT
THE PEOPLE WHO STRUGGLE.



International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD) is a global event held on **August 31** each year. Its purpose is to raise awareness of overdoses, reduce the stigma of drug-related deaths and acknowledge the grief felt by families and friends. Here are some ways to recognize IOAD:

- Attend our Keeping Hope event, the 3rd Annual Overdose Awareness & Remembrance Day presented by Volusia Recovery Alliance and Halifax Health Continuing Care. The event is being held on August 28, 2021 at 5 pm at the Daytona Beach Drive-In Christian Church
- Post a special tribute on social media to your loved one who has passed away from an overdose. Use #endoverdose to be a part of the online campaign.
- Wear purple to raise awareness of overdose and spread the message that overdose is preventable.
- Donate in your loved one's memory to organizations that provide recovery services to people suffering with substance use disorders.

Research has also shown that people who get exposure to sunshine show improvement in their mood. Being in the sunshine increases Vitamin D, which has been shown to help stimulate endorphins which help us feel better. Just sitting in the sun for 15 – 30 minutes a day can make a big difference in the weight of your grief. Here are some fun ways to soak up the rays.

- Take a short walk in the sunshine with your dog
- Take a bike ride by yourself or with friends
- Take a trip to the beach & write your loved one's name in the sand
- Make their favorite dish for a meal or bring to an outdoor BBQ
- Have a picnic at the park, leave a painted rock in memory of them
- Explore trails and path, enjoying the serenity that nature provides along the way



Ask a Grief Counselor

Question: My loved one died from an overdose. How do I tell my child or teen?

Answer: *Start with a short, simple explanation of what happened, in language children can understand, and let their questions guide what else to share. You don't have to describe in detail what happened, but try to answer their questions honestly. Being honest minimizes confusion and keeps children and teens from using their energy and resources to try and figure out what happened or blame themselves. It is important for children to hear about the death from a caring adult rather than through indirect sources. Children may be unfamiliar with the concept of addiction. To help them understand, adults can explain that addiction is a disease of the brain, in which the brain doesn't function correctly, which leads to engaging in unsafe, unhealthy behaviors, like using substances. An overdose can be explained as when someone takes too much of a substance or the wrong substance and it makes their body stop working. If you have been struggling with how to have these conversations, or have not been fully honest up to this point, try not to be too hard on yourself. After all, you are also grappling with your own grief. It's never too late to talk about with them. Going forward, the key is to create an environment where difficult, yet necessary conversations can take place.*

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