



# Session Abstracts and Bios

## Premiere Sponsor



*Please Note:*

*The Symposium has applied to offer contact hours through the National Board of Certified Counselors, the Association of Social Work Boards, the New York State Education Department for Licensed Master Social Workers and Licensed Clinical Social Workers, and the New York State Education Department of Licensed Mental Health Counselors for the eligible sessions listed below.*

*All sessions are subject to change.*

## “How can I support grieving children when I am grieving too” – Lessons from the Pandemic about Self-Care

Presented by: [David Schonfeld](#) & [Thomas Demaria](#)

As a result of the pandemic, primary and secondary losses were reported by educators and other school staff, healthcare workers and children's bereavement center/program staff and volunteers. Processing of personal loss experiences and emotions while attending to the needs of large numbers of grieving children, families, and colleagues was indeed challenging. Many support professionals avoided addressing their personal grief and neglected personal self-care in part because they believed this was needed so that they could be available for grieving children. This dedication to the needs of grieving children sadly increased their risk of developing compassion fatigue, difficulties adjusting to their own personal losses, and health difficulties. This symposium will provide participants with tools which can be used to help identify and then modify internal and contextual barriers which result in the neglect of personal wellness needs. Examples of practical self-care strategies in emotional, health and interpersonal domains will be discussed that can be shared with school professionals and colleagues in children's bereavement centers/programs. Ample time will be provided for questions and discussions so that we can all share our ideas about how to support ourselves and our colleagues during the long-term recovery from the pandemic and promote wellness.

*Administrative, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will be able to provide examples of self-care strategies in emotional, health and interpersonal domains
2. Participants will be able to identify and modify internal and contextual barriers which result in the neglect of personal wellness needs
3. Participants will be able to evaluate the potential risks for staff who support grieving children when personal grief and self-care are not addressed

## L.Y.G.H.T.: A Trauma-Informed Intervention for Youth in Foster Care Who are Grieving

Presented by: [Monique Mitchell](#) & [Juliette Martinez](#)

As youth navigate their way through foster care, their lives are inundated with grief and loss. Many youth in foster care are left alone to cope with their grief because the child welfare system often fails to recognize or acknowledge the losses that children experience. This presentation will discuss youth's experiences of death and non-death loss, introduce a new intervention for grieving youth in foster care (the L.Y.G.H.T. program), and share preliminary findings from the program's implementation with youth, ages 12-16, in the foster care system.

*Research, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Discuss the importance of addressing and acknowledging loss and grief for youth in foster care
2. Describe a new peer grief support program for youth experiencing death and non-death loss in foster care
3. Assess the needs, benefits, and challenges for implementing a peer grief support program in a child welfare community

## Sustaining Peer Support Volunteers: Creating Community and Enhancing Group Facilitation Experience

Presented by: [Jamie Schwellenbach](#) & [Christine Linnehan](#)

This session will focus on supporting volunteer peer support facilitators who are the heart of The Center for Grieving Children's grief and loss services. We will explore practical and creative ways to build a sense of community and enrich group facilitator experience.

*Programming and/or Activities/Techniques, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Will have increased knowledge of implementing volunteer facilitated grief and loss peer support groups.
2. Will learn two strategies to build community among volunteer peer support facilitators.
3. Will be able to demonstrate at least two mind-body strategies for self-care.

## Experiential Resourcing: Designing Your Own Expressive Activities for Children & Teens

Presented by: [Stephanie Heitkemper](#) & [Heather LaBouy](#)

This immersive presentation will be led by two experienced clinicians who regularly facilitate grief groups and weekend camp experiences for children age 7-17. Inspired by the suitcases we pack full for each weekend camp; our goal is to help participants build their own grief group toolkit. Participants will watch and participate in a variety of process activities, learn skills to help kids and teens stay engaged, and be able to see tools first-hand. Whether participants are just starting with grief groups or have years of experience, this presentation is an opportunity to build and grow their engagement with flexible, low cost, and creative activities. Presenters will showcase and break down developmentally appropriate interventions and techniques to engage kids in a strength based and flexible approach to grieving. From Ice Breakers to art and closing rituals, participants will explore how they can create their own memorable and engaging group experience.

*Programming and/or Activities/Techniques, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will learn how to adapt and create creative expression activities based off worksheet examples.
2. Participants will learn how to identify 5 key supplies that can create their camp in a box and or suitcase. While designing multiple engaging creative expression activities over the developmental span.
3. Participants will gain insight on how to support children and teens when they are displaying a necessity to protect themselves in group.

## The Intersection between Homelessness and Childhood Grief

Presented by: [Debra Albo-Steiger](#) & [Daniel Sheridan](#)

This presentation will explore the connection between homelessness and childhood grief. Many children experience homelessness as the result of the death of a parent or guardian. And conversely, during homelessness, a child often experiences the loss of a loved one. Debra Albo-Steiger led the Homeless Education Program for the fourth largest school district in the nation for over nine years and will discuss how bereavement centers around the country can connect with their McKinney-Vento District Homeless Liaison. This partnership is critical in working together to identify students who are homeless and are in need of grief support. She will describe a specific group of students, Unaccompanied Homeless Youth, an extremely vulnerable population who benefit from grief support, once they are accurately identified by the school system and bereavement center. Additionally, Dr. Daniel Sheridan will share techniques to provide support through bereavement centers as well as discuss the unique challenges children and teens face when they must grieve the loss of a loved one during homelessness.

*Specific Bereaved Populations, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. The participant will gain an understanding of how homelessness is often tied to death and the reasons why this occurs.
2. Each participant will learn strategies to best collaborate with their local McKinney-Vento District Homeless Liaison to provide grief support to staff and to Unaccompanied Homeless Youth.
3. Participants will leave with ideas of how to work with local Continuums of Care to train about grief sensitivity to homeless shelters and other homeless providers in their communities.

## Blue Butterfly Ball – Using Awareness Events to Provide Grief Education and Support in Your Community

Presented by: [Allison Mahon](#), [Marcie Taylor](#) & [Bethany Gardner](#)

The Drew Michael Taylor Foundation is located in a rural university town in Pennsylvania. Learn how the foundation, founded by two bereaved parents, collaborates with university and community entities to meet the needs of grieving children, teens and adults. We will demonstrate how grief theories provide the groundwork for grief awareness events that we use to provide grief education and support in our community, as well as increase attendance at our grief support programs. The main focus will be the Blue Butterfly Ball that we created in November 2018 as an alternative to the many Daddy/Daughter dances held in our area, as well as our approach to helping our families work through various holidays through this experiential session.

*Outreach and Community Collaboration, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will recognize William Worden's Four Tasks of Mourning, Stroebe and Schut's Dual Process Model and Klass, Silverman and Nickman's Continuing Bonds theory in the grief awareness events developed by the Drew Michael Taylor Foundation.
2. Participants will be able to apply ideas learned in the presentation to offer unique grief awareness events in their own community in order to provide a valuable resource that local counselors, therapists, schools, funeral directors and others can share in order to educate and support both griever and non-griever.
3. Participants will discuss how the events and ideas presented in this session can be used to increase grief education and support in their own community, and offer other event ideas that can be utilized by their colleagues.

## Impact of Grief on Academic Performance

Presented by: [Samantha Anthony](#)

This presentation seeks to identify the correlational patterns between childhood grief and childhood academic performance. The presentation will explore the impact that grief work has on academic performance, cognitive performance and behavior performance in schools. The data is based on grief work being done in the Philadelphia, PA area and is based on data from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and data from Uplift Center For Grieving Children, in addition to other recent literature on the topic of grief and education. This presentation seeks to use both the identified data as well as interactive audience participation to present the information.

*Research, Outcomes, and Measurements, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will be able to identify and categorize accurately the difference between cognitive and behavioral responses to grief in school aged youth.
2. Participants will accurately identify at least 3 grief responses and predict their relationship to the trajectory of academic performance in school aged children
3. Participants will name up to 3 reliable interventions to grief related academic decline and discuss how to employ the interventions.

## Writing THAT Successful Grant Proposal

Presented by: [Debbie Meyer](#)

This workshop includes information and practice in reading and evaluating proposals and reports, finding potential sources of grant support, reading and interpreting grant program guidelines, and writing a grant or research proposal.

*Administrative, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Discuss the various concepts related to grant writing and administration.
2. Construct a coherent organizational narrative.
3. Assess potential funding sources.

## Examining Posttraumatic Growth in Children's Peer Support Grief Groups: A Pilot Study

Presented by: [Pamela Gabbay](#), [Lynn Snyder](#), & [Ryan P. Kilmer](#)

This presentation describes a pilot study examining posttraumatic growth (PTG), positive change experienced as a result of the struggle with crisis or trauma, in 6 to 12 year-old grief support groups at two bereavement centers. This project grows from a partnership between grief practitioners involved in the support of grieving children and families and a university-based researcher. Although PTG has garnered considerable interest among those who work in grief, and many who work in the field of child bereavement have reported recognizing PTG in the children they serve, minimal research has examined the construct empirically. Similarly, even though many grief centers employ a peer or mutual support-focused approach, limited research has documented the effectiveness of support-based approaches in the grief context. Presenters will outline study methods and measures and discuss findings, including those related to children's reports of PTG, peer support, and other factors explored as potential correlates of PTG. Preliminary analyses indicate that the children reported moderate levels of PTG, and that their sense of hope was a prime correlate of PTG. Peer support also related significantly to children's positive future expectations. Future directions for research as well as clinical implications for the grief field will be discussed.

*Research, Outcomes, and Measurements, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Describe the construct of posttraumatic growth, domains in which growth has been observed, and factors associated with growth.
2. Learn the ways in which peer support is associated with children's self-reported growth and social-emotional well-being.
3. Be able to articulate how research on posttraumatic growth in the grief context can have implications for those providing grief services and support.

## Multi-tiered System of Care for Grieving Adolescents

Presented by: [Jillian Blueford](#)

It is nearly inevitable that an early adolescent (ages 10-14) will experience a death-related loss of an individual significant to them. Given the considerable amount of time early adolescents spend within the school system, a multi-tiered system of care (MTSC) is a systematic school counseling program that reflects the needs of early adolescents grieving a death-related loss. This presentation will provide insight into the unique developmental concerns and needs of grieving early adolescents and evidence-based techniques, approaches, and frameworks that schools can implement at a multi-leveled system of care.

*Programming and/or Activities/Techniques, New to the field, Advanced Learner, Everyone*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Attendees will identify unique grief expressions and responses for early adolescents
2. Attendees will be able to comprehend the foundations of a multi-tiered system of care
3. Attendees will learn how to implement effective techniques and interventions when engaging with grieving early adolescents

## Taking Awesome Care of Ourselves (T.A.C.O.): A Personalized Self-Care Plan

Presented by: [Carrie Bauer](#)

Working with grieving children is incredibly rewarding but can be challenging at times, and if professionals are not practicing proper self-care, it can lead to burnout or compassion fatigue. During this presentation, Bauer will discuss types of burnout commonly experienced by those in the grief field and how professionals can become more resilient. Using a worksheet developed by Bauer, participants will build their own T.A.C.O. self-care plan and learn about other tools to help them care for themselves.

*Programming and/or Activities/Techniques, Develop a personalized T.A.C.O. self-care plan and establish an ongoing self-care routine.*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Identify the types of burnout that can be experienced by those working in the bereavement and end-of-life field.
2. Discuss tools helping professionals can utilize to help build vicarious resilience.
3. Develop a personalized T.A.C.O. self-care plan and establish an ongoing self-care routine.

## Empowering Caregivers of Grieving Children: How To Apply Expressive Art Tools Used By Professionals

Presented by: [Lauren Raney](#) & [Mickayla Bedenian](#)

A grief-informed movement is upon us. In this current state of the world, grief education has never been more important as we all experience both death and non-death losses. In order to become more successful in approaching this unique state of grief and its effect on the children we serve, we need to consider tools that are most helpful. We know that caregivers are significant informants to their children's behaviors, and we know that children of all ages use expressive arts as a vehicle for expression, so let's start there. Have you heard this question from parents, "Does my child need to see a therapist because they are not crying or talking about their grief?" or "Is there something wrong with them"? In this experiential presentation, participants will learn about and interact with tools that empower and inform caregivers on how to respond to the varied types of grief responses and how to use expressive arts as a way to communicate with their child, provide a safe space for expression, and gain insight into their child's perspective on their loss.

*Specific Bereaved Populations, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Identify benefits of Art therapy as it relates to grief and the parent-child relationship; providing a safe space to express, giving a voice to feelings and experiences that may not be able to be verbally expressed and build family coping skills together.
2. Learn ways to empower the parents and caregivers you work with so that they feel more grief-informed when responding to their child's natural and normal response to grief.
3. Learn tangible tools and developmentally appropriate art directives that grieving children and their families can do at home to aid in communication, togetherness, and grief education.

## Grief Center/OPO Partnership to Enhance Grief Support for Donor Families

Presented by: [Karen Scott](#) & [Nicole Kellen](#)

This presentation will provide an example of a powerful partnership between a grief center and an Organ Procurement Organization (OPO) to enhance the ability of both organizations to provide effective grief support for donor families. The partnership allowed both organizations to focus on more fully understanding the family experience in organ donation, the complex bereavement that often results, and increased need for support due to family structure, cause of death, etc. Through the partnership, the grief center becomes an extension of the support provided by the OPO. Grief Center staff receive education about the donor procurement process and special grief needs of donor families that enhances their ability to respond to the needs of donor families. Examples will be provided regarding how to assist families in making meaning of the loss by developing a narrative that involves the gift of life and special activities to provide donor families opportunities to honor the memory of their loved ones who gave the gift of life. The partnership activities have resulted in increased numbers of donor families participating in grief center programs and the creation of a children's book specifically for children of donors, highlighting the special gift given by their loved ones.

*Outreach and Community Collaboration, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will be able to describe the activities of a successful partnership between a grief center and an Organ Procurement Organization to enhance services to grieving families.
2. Participants will be able to identify specific needs unique to donor families and how to utilize a narrative approach to make meaning of the loss.
3. Participants will be able to utilize strategies for creating opportunities to recognize donor families for the special gift given by their loved ones.

## “That Just Sounds Depressing”: Bereaved Black Female Young Adult Perceptions of Grief Support

Presented by: [Tashel Bordere](#) & [Mary Alice Varga](#)

This interactive session provides a cultural contextual and developmental look at the lived experiences and perceptions of grief support in a Black female college student sample. Descriptive phenomenological theory and method guided the study. In-depth, one-on-one, face-to-face interviews were conducted with twenty female young adults to gather information on the participants' life world and lived experiences with loss, coping, and support expectations. Findings indicate patterns of stigma, cultural conflicts, and cultural strengths that have important implications for support and resource provision geared to meet the unique needs of this student population. Implications for researchers, educators, and practitioners will be discussed.

*Specific Bereaved Populations, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Describe female young adult perceptions of grief support
2. Examine cultural contextual factors underlying Black young adult females' thoughts and intentions around grief support
3. Delineate approaches to informal and formal support for Black female young adults coping with loss

## When Hearts are Stretched: Fostering Compassion Resilience Amidst a Pandemic

Presented by: [Tina Barrett](#)

For many care providers, filling your own metaphorical cup is easier said than done. The spark that draws us to our work can begin to dim when faced with daily pressures and the mounting stress among our teams. Workplace dynamics, time pressures, personal stressors, and repeated immersion in tough stories can take a toll. Then – we find ourselves a second year into a global pandemic. What anchors us during these times? What tools keep difficult conversations constructive and help us to productively manage the expressed anger and stress of others? How can we continually regenerate ourselves, interact in ever-more effective ways, and set up systems for healthy workplaces?

Too often, workplace wellness oversimplifies the complexity of systems. Together we'll explore practical strategies related to individual employees, collegial dynamics, and larger work structures – with the goal of enhancing well-being and tools to address trauma and chronic stress. May you leave feeling inspired and empowered with tools to help you, your colleagues, and your employees keep on keeping on.

*Administrative, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Identify impacts of pervasive exposure to stress and trauma.
2. Differentiate between individual, interpersonal, and organizational wellness strategies.
3. Identify two tools to address chronic stress and grief amidst COVID.

## Anticipatory Grief Support for Children with Parental Illness

Presented by: [Meredith Cooper](#) & [Kim Fryar](#)

Children of parents with advanced cancer have significantly elevated levels of distress and depression compared to the general population. This level of distress is even greater during the terminal phase of the disease than after the parent dies. This presentation will present a curriculum designed to support children and parents during the advanced illness phase, discuss initial research findings and the value of community/academic partnerships with multiple entities.

*Programming and/or Activities/Techniques, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will gain knowledge of an advanced illness curriculum for children and teens.
2. Participants will learn preliminary findings of an advanced cancer research study.
3. Participants will understand the value of community and academic partnerships.

## Kinship Care and Grief: Helping grandfamilies and other kinship families bond, heal, and rebuild

Presented by: [Lane Pease](#)

When grandparents or other kin step in to raise children after a death of a parent or parents, they face unique challenges. These caregivers must transition to a new role while many times balancing their own grief. They may face isolation from peers and mourn their former roles such as "grandma" or "auntie". The children may have faced prior losses and now must deal with many secondary losses as they adjust to new caregivers and homes. Learn how to support these new families by learning their challenges, connecting them with resources, and offering activities that helps bond and heal the family. Hear honest stories from families who are on this journey about how they are coping and what has help them rebuild.

*Programming and/or Activities/Techniques, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Understand the unique challenges when grandparents or kinship members step into raise children after a death.
2. Identify bonding and healing activities for grandfamilies and other kin caregivers.
3. Recognize the importance of supporting the grandparent or other caregiver through their own grief.

## Write Your Heart Out: Self Expression to cope with grief, loss, trauma, & stress

Presented by: [Michele Post](#)

Writing and poetry are powerful tools for grief, loss, trauma, stress management, and healing. Do the children, teens, or adults you work with think they aren't a good writer (or do you)? Help them overcome that negative self-talk barrier. Research on free form writing shows its positive impact on healing and the immune system. In this interactive lecture/discussion, experiential, and personal reflection workshop, poetry and written activities will be taught and experienced. Program coordinators and group leaders can use activities to help families process their grief and improve coping as well as prevent stress & burnout

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Implement tools to identify and heal negative self-talk that interferes with writing and poetic expression.
2. Utilize journaling/writing techniques to help with grief, loss, trauma, and stress
3. Utilize poetry techniques to help with grief, loss, trauma, and stress

## Aftermath of Mass Violence: Impact and Interventions for Traumatic Grief

Presented by: [Ashley Jesse](#)

As mass violence increases, so does the need for specialized trauma-focused grief services for children. Treatment and interventions for trauma caused by mass violence will be explored through case study and research to equip mental health professionals with tools to treat traumatized, bereaved youth and their families.

*Specific Bereaved Populations, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Understand complicated grief and trauma associated with mass violence
2. Integrate specific interventions based on client need
3. Recognizing ongoing trauma, unprocessed grief and retraumatization

## Community Collaborations: Riding the Rollercoaster

Presented by: [Amanda Sahli](#) & [Lisa E. Schmitt](#)

Community collaborations can provide a rich environment for program design and development while serving unmet needs of the community. At the same time, they can be challenging when individual agency priorities and needs intersect and potentially conflict.

In our mission to create a comprehensive network of support for families before, during, and after the death of a child, we learned to navigate the challenges of working within multiple organizations with distinct missions and identities.

Presenters will share how they prepared for and navigated the difficulties of a multi-agency collaboration and the successes and failures along the way.

*Outreach and Community Collaboration, Programming and/or Activities/Techniques, Specific Bereaved Populations, Advanced Learner*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Recognize potential challenges of multi-organization collaborations
2. Employ appropriate techniques to work through obstacles
3. Identify key leadership roles to maintain focus on long term objectives

## Supporting Preschool-Aged Children and Their Families After a Suicide Loss

Presented by: [Adam Carter](#)

Although death is considered to be universally unavoidable, many adult caregivers are still uncomfortable discussing death with preschool-aged children. A survey of 270 parents of 4–6-year-old children revealed that parents were least comfortable talking with their children about death when compared with talking about other biological topics including reproduction, life processes, aging, and illness (Nguyen & Rosengren, 2004). When the death is a suicide loss, adult caregivers are faced with the task of explaining two complicated and often abstract concepts, death and suicide, to a child who developmentally may not be able to comprehend what is being shared with them. The use of death metaphors, the discomfort of talking about suicide, and the fear of upsetting or traumatizing the child with this information may prevent an adult caregiver from sharing about the death with a child in a way in which they could understand. Adult caregivers may seek out resources from professionals who work with this age group in hopes of getting advice on how to even start this conversation. This presentation will provide participants with a developmentally appropriate way to talk with preschool-aged children about death, ways that preschool-aged children may experience grief, how to share with a child about a suicide loss, and ways that adult caregivers and family systems can support grieving preschool-aged children.

*Specific Bereaved Populations,*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will be able to explain the unique grief responses of preschool-aged children to adult caregivers.
2. Participants will be able to help adult caregivers inform the preschool-aged children in their care about a suicide death in developmentally appropriate language
3. Participants will be able to support adult caregivers in choosing developmentally appropriate grief-informed activities that support the grief journey of preschool-aged children.

## Organizational Advancement: How to Grow a Children's Grief Organization in a Smart and Sustainable Way

Presented by: [Lisa Aman](#) & [Debra Brook](#)

How do you grow your organization in a smart and sustainable way? What information and tools can you use to grow your funding base, allocate scarce resources, identify and leverage partnerships and most importantly reach and support more bereaved children? Organizational Advancement: How to Grow a Children's Grief Organization in a Smart and Sustainable Way will discuss how to address the challenges of building awareness, identify and prioritize potential funding sources, and grow and empower your team.

*Administrative, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Identify and evaluate an organization's potential sources of support to enable growth: board, donors, families, volunteers, partners
2. Utilize internal and external information to prioritize both programming and funding initiatives
3. Design a toolkit specific to your organization that supports growth in a smart and sustainable way

## Dysfunctional Pandemic Grief? A Critical Analysis of the Pandemic Grief Scale

Presented by: [Donna Schuurman](#)

A 5-question screening tool for "dysfunctional grief due to a COVID-19 loss" was developed to "identify probable cases" of this supposed phenomenon. This presentation will explain and critique the concept, the methodology utilized to construct the tool, as well as the scale's validity and reliability.

*Research, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Identify the 5-questions in the Pandemic Grief Scale (PGS) intended to screen "probable cases of dysfunctional grief during the pandemic."
2. Critique flaws in the methodology and generalizability of the PGS
3. Question language associated with grief-related constructs and people who are grieving.

## Partnering With Schools to Support Grieving Students

Presented by: [Lauren Schneider](#) & [Carolyn Christ](#)

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures and during the pandemic OUR HOUSE had to pivot several times to meet the urgent need for grief support services in our heavily impacted community. Since 1997 we have provided school-based grief support groups in the second largest district in the nation but found ourselves needing to find new ways to do this first virtually and then when schools reopened Fall 2021 with stringent safety measures for providers coming on campus. In addition we were tasked with finding ways to support grieving school professionals and equip them to support the students on their campuses within the scope of their roles. In this workshop we will share lessons learned building relationships with school districts, designing evidence-based curricula, supporting grieving school faculty and equipping school mental health clinicians with tools to use in school based counseling sessions with grieving children.

We will also look at the needs of volunteers leaning on staff while readjusting to the demands of providing grief support services in the pandemic and beyond.

*Programming and/or Activities/Techniques, Checked*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Identify 2 ways to build relationships with the schools in your area
2. Identify to strategies to use to support school professionals
3. Identify 4 goals when designing curricula for use in school-based programs

## Filling the Well: Increasing Volunteer Retention and Longevity of Your Volunteer Program Through Personal Loss History Exploration and Self-care

Presented by: [Meghan O'Mahoney](#)

This presentation emphasizes how self-care and exploring one's personal loss history positively impacts a volunteer-driven organization servicing grieving children and families. Good self-care for volunteers increases a volunteer's ability to support those who are grieving, evidenced by retention rates and volunteer feedback. Loss history exploration allows volunteers to discover their readiness to support grieving children and works to prevent burnout. Research supports the importance of building self-care rituals for volunteers from the recruitment stage, through training and beyond as done at the Highmark Caring Place, a Center for Grieving Children, Adolescents and Their Families—a program with four facilities across Pennsylvania.

*Programming and/or Activities/Techniques, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Explain the role of self-care and personal loss exploration in a volunteer-driven peer support program.
2. Identify three self-care techniques that can be implemented for volunteers supporting grieving children.
3. Apply ongoing effective self-care strategies for diverse volunteer populations that will promote longevity for volunteers.

## Grief comes in all shapes and sizes - exploring Anticipatory Grief

Presented by: [Corrie Sirota](#)

When a loved one is diagnosed with an illness, the terminally ill person and their loved ones may begin to experience anticipatory grief. This workshop will explore all the uniqueness of anticipatory grief, discuss how it is experienced by the person living with the terminal illness and how their loved ones experience this type of grief as well. Special emphasis on how to support bereaved children will be identified.

*Specific Bereaved Populations, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. To define anticipatory grief
2. To highlight the unique aspects of anticipatory grief and how it differs from post death grief
3. To identify interventions that mental health professionals can use to help families cope with anticipatory grief.

## Grief in the Juvenile Justice System

Presented by: [Sydney Ford](#)

An overwhelming amount of our juveniles in the justice system are grieving and many of their behaviors are a manifestation of that grief. This session will focus on how we can advocate for trauma-informed care for our juveniles in the justice system to help them with their grief, and what we can do to address their grief and keep them from encountering the system, again.

*Outreach,*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. How prevalent grief is in the juvenile justice system and why many of our youth manifest their grief with certain behaviors
2. Address how individuals can advocate in their local community for trauma-informed care for juveniles in the justice system
3. How we can address behaviors in juveniles early to prevent them from encountering the justice system

## StarBright Yoga: Self-Care for Courageous Helpers

Presented by: [Kiri Meyer](#)

"You really need to make sure to care for yourself throughout this time." How many times do you find yourself saying that to those you serve? Now my question for you is, how many times do you practice what you encourage others to do? \*Big sigh\* This question is not to shame you, rather to bring light to the fact that as the courageous helper you are, you too, deserve to care for yourself.

This community of courageous helpers is always on the move, always thinking of others, and continually striving to do the best we can. Let's take a moment to give back to ourselves and renew our sense of passion and drive. Join us for an hour full of gentle reflection, compassionate movement, and the opportunity to feel connected to our purpose.

\*\* All bodies, levels, and abilities welcome. This will be run as a beginner's experience \*\*

*Administrative, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Reflect on purpose in both personal and professional arenas of life, to encourage growth and gratitude.
2. Build a gentle yoga practice to create a mind-body connection, fostering an overall sense of well-being.
3. Integrate a few mindfulness practices into the courageous helper's routine of self-care, in an effort to help reduce burnout.

## 2022 Research & Evaluation Panel The View from Here: Children's Grief from Underrepresented Communities

Facilitated by: [Adam Carter](#), Panel TBD

The 2022 Research & Evaluation Panel will focus on children's grief experiences from underrepresented populations. Drawing upon theory, research, evaluation, and practical application, the panelists will converse about the needs of children in LGBTQI, BIPOC, and foster care communities. We hope to see you there!

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Describe current research and theories that address loss and grief for children from underrepresented populations.
2. Examine the unique loss and grief experiences of children from underrepresented populations.
3. Justify the importance of addressing the loss and grief experiences of children from underrepresented populations.

## Between Two Screens-How to Implement Effective Grief Groups both in English & Spanish in Our Schools

Presented by: [Michelle Gonzalez](#)

Have you ever wondered how you could effectively implement a successful grief group in schools? Through this presentation, you will learn tips and considerations that are critical to consider while effectively implementing a grief group in a school in both English and Spanish. Full dialogue and discourse about cultural implications and considerations; logistics and planning; and how to loop caregivers into their child's grief group process will take place.

*Programming and/or Activities/Techniques, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will become familiar with key components needed to effectively implement both virtual and in-person grief support group with students in school settings.
2. Participants will leave equipped with enhanced knowledge of how to facilitate a support a grief group in schools (in both English and Spanish)
3. Participants will have a clearer understanding of how to include caregivers of grieving youth in to a grief group that operates in a school

## An overnight camp experience for adult caregivers of grieving children

Presented by: [Barb Kamlet](#)

Adult caregivers of grieving children can be challenged by insuring the physical and emotional wellbeing of their children in the midst of trying to find their own emotional balance. Next PAGE is an overnight camp designed specifically to provide participants with a relaxing and meaningful experience of support, education, and community building to help them meet some of their own emotional needs as well as those of the grieving children in their care.

*Camps, New to the field, Advanced Learner, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to identify the benefits of providing a camp specifically for adult caregivers of grieving children
2. At the conclusion of this session, participants will have specific steps to planning and implementing a grief camp for adults who are caring for grieving children
3. At the end of this presentation, participants will be prepared to implement one specific activity to help campers reflect on their experience of their death loss

## Don't Forget About Us! Supporting Young Adults and College Students in Grief

Presented by: [Mandi Zucker](#)

Years ago, there was a common myth that children didn't need to be supported after a loss because we believed they weren't affected by grief. We've come a long way, and now realize the importance of supporting children after loss. But what happens when these children turn 18? Often, we ship them off to a foreign land called college with limited support networks and a lack of accessible coping tools. For grieving students, this can be a perfect storm to learn unhealthy coping tools or to spiral into mental health concerns that don't need to be there.

If only they had support. This workshop can't fix the limited resources available on college campuses, but we can talk about ways in which we can support students at college differently. How can students access support? Can we educate peers and staff to be allies to grieving students? Can we identify student leaders and others who can be supportive, and how do we train them appropriately?

This workshop will talk about strategies to reach out to college campuses and then explore goals when we work with them.

*Outreach and Community Collaboration, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Identify appropriate professionals and groups on a college campus who can provide support to grieving students.
2. Identify strategies for educating students and staff to normalize and support grieving students.
3. Summarize opportunities for partnerships with institutions of higher education.

## It Takes a Village: A Model for Supporting Adults Raising Bereaved Children

Presented by: [Andy McNiel](#)

After a death in the family, relationships between children and adults in the home can become strained. Each person in the family is grieving in their own way and dynamics within the family may shift. Parents and Guardians often struggle to find ways to connect with their children and to understand how to support their children when they, themselves, are grieving too. When parents/guardians are grieving, having the energy to meet all the demands of running a household is a challenge. This presentation will provide a model for offering parenting support to adults raising bereaved children. We will explore important elements of positive parent/child relationships that can be implemented into a parenting program for the primary caregiver of children participating in your bereavement support program.

*, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will be able to identify the elements that help support strong bonds between parents/guardians and their children.
2. Participants will be able to identify adaptive tasks within the home that families must navigate after the death of a family member.
3. Participants will learn the primary elements of a model for providing parenting support to the adults raising bereaved children.

## Healing Historical Trauma and Unresolved Grief

Presented by: [Meagan Rides At The Door](#)

Many American Indian children are not aware of the concept of historical trauma. For example, children who are not exposed to or taught their tribal language do not recognize that tribal language loss is a result of historical traumatic events that occurred in the past. They may exhibit internalized shame due to not knowing their language instead of attributing it to external past events. This session will use examples such as this to be able to help others connect the past to current day experiences much more explicitly in their work to provide healing.

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Discuss the impacts of historical trauma among Indigenous individuals, families, and communities on current day practice
2. Present the concept of historical trauma reminders and application of a historical trauma lens
3. Demonstrate current day implications and strategies for addressing historical trauma and unresolved grief individually and organizationally

## Board Member Accountability: Because The Families We Serve Deserve A Strong Organization

Presented by: [Karin Douglas](#)

Nonprofit executives and board leaders often express frustration with board member inertia - lackluster meeting participation, inconsistent fundraising engagement, and non-functioning board committees. Getting beyond the negatives requires a shift in perspective - one that acknowledges that each board member will perform when they fully understand how their unique engagement ties to the organization's ability to make significant progress toward strategic goals. This session will align board member talent/skill/network with strategic objectives, board committee work-plans, and board member recruitment. Participants will leave with templates, timelines, and path forward for board member impact.

*Administrative, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. participants will learn how to develop a strategically impactful board member pipeline
2. participants will develop annual committee work-plans that reflect board member engagement in achieving strategic objectives
3. participants will understand board leadership, recruitment, and engagement through the lenses of strategy, influence, and inspiration

## Exploring the development, growth, and sustainability of a successful children's bereavement camp

Presented by: [Sarah DeCosta](#)

Exploring the development, growth, and sustainability of a successful children's bereavement camp; In person, virtually, and everything in between.

This presentation will examine the development, growth, and sustainability of a successful children's bereavement camp. Essential components to be discussed include community networking, marketing, importance of volunteers, therapeutic vs traditional camp activities, follow up, assessment, and how to make these programs work in person and/or virtually based on your community needs. HopeHealth, the second oldest hospice in the country, developed Camp BraveHeart, a children's bereavement camp which has served over 100 children each year for more than a decade. This camp will be referenced in addition to empirical research. Opportunity to discuss and support fellow professionals will be provided.

*Research, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Develop a foundation for an evolving children's bereavement camp
2. Explore techniques for expanding programming in person or by adding virtual options
3. Identify requirements for maintaining a camp program based on the S.M.A.R.T. stratagem (Bachman, 2013)

## Expanding Online Tools: Increasing Capacity in Parents and Community to Support Grieving Children

Presented by: [Nadine Gariepy-Fisk](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic had us all redirect and reconceptualize how we provide grief counselling and supports to children, teens and families. We were forced to let go of foundational aspects of our work: the face-to-face connections and supports. Many of us reached out to families and colleagues, engaging in a thoughtful approach to creating online and remote services.

Beyond the anxiety to reinvent ourselves to meet the needs of our clients, we found opportunities. What if we could create a future that offered less barriers and more choices for families? In a world where online education, resources, and supports are acceptable and accessible, is it possible that some of our services might be better delivered in an online format?

In this presentation, we will consider two of the Children's Grief Centre new online programs: the Parent Lunch & Learn Series and the Grief in my Backpack School Resource. This expansion in our range of services aims specifically to increase capacity in parents and caregivers, school personnel, and the community and help us provide the right support, at the right time, in the right way.

*Programming and/or Activities/Techniques, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Identify barriers and opportunities in service delivery approach
2. Develop a list of gaps in service offerings to be considered
3. Formulate a plan to seek client and stakeholder input

## Versatility of the Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model: 2022 Results and More

Presented by: [Michaeleen \(Micki\) Burns](#) & [Laura Landry](#)

Since 2018, the Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model (CBEM) has become the gold standard for quantifying the magnitude of grief in youth. Each year, the Judi's House/JAG team in partnership with the New York Life Foundation enhances the CBEM toolkit with up-to-date results and supplementary tools that estimate bereavement based on factors such as population density (e.g., rural, urban, metro), county location, race, ethnicity, and coming in 2022, cause of death. These products are powerful resources for professionals advancing and advocating so no child is alone in grief.

This workshop demonstrates the versatility of the CBEM by:

- 1) Presenting 2022 national and state findings,
- 2) Previewing the 2022 CBEM Key Topic data release offering bereavement rates for adult and youth leading causes of death,
- 3) Showcasing existing CBEM resources, and
- 4) Providing unpublished CBEM analyses designed to capture the complexity of this time in our history where the pandemic upended our daily lives and calls to strengthen diversity, equity, and inclusion are paramount.

The presenters will unify workshop content by soliciting real-world case examples from participants and walking through the steps to accessing and applying CBEM resources to answer programming, fundraising, and evaluation dilemmas.

*Research, Outcomes, and Measurements, New to the field, Advanced Learner Everyone*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Relay the magnitude of bereavement in the United States and in their State according to 2022 CBEM results.
2. Articulate how rates of bereavement vary based on youth race and ethnicity at the national and state level and explain how COVID-19 may impact these results.
3. Derive prevalence related questions specific to their community and utilize CBEM resources to locate data that offers answers.

## Supporting Communities and Schools: Collaboration and Creativity

Presented by: [Dana Minor](#)

This informative presentation will explore creative approaches to community outreach and will provide tools to better support students and school communities who are grieving. We will discuss collaboration efforts, activities, and programming ideas, as well as presentation formats for professionals working with families after a death loss. Participants will identify strategies in providing helpful activities and educational opportunities in grief and bereavement and identify ways to create a supportive environment in their community. We will discuss how these activities can enhance your existing relationships with area school districts and community partners and create special opportunities for remembrance.

*Outreach and Community Collaboration, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will be able to identify helpful strategies in community outreach and supporting schools.
2. Participants will be able to identify various creative activities and program ideas.
3. Participants will be able to identify the benefits of collaboration and continued educational opportunities in schools.

## Voices after Violence: Working with Traumatically Bereaved Families

Presented by: [Maureen Patterson-Fede](#) & [Minelia Rodriguez](#)

Families who have experienced the violent death of a significant person or loved one are often left with unrelenting pain and unresolved explanations. These families may feel like there is nowhere to turn and few people who understand. This presentation provides a platform for the families of the Good Grief Program to share their stories of what they needed in the aftermath of experiencing a violent death. The presenters will integrate these stories into leading research on supporting children, youth, and families after a traumatic death with the goal of better informing the field on how to support this population.

*Specific Bereaved Populations, Everyone is Welcome*

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Identify the multidimensional factors influencing familial perspectives toward violent loss.
2. Describe the factors that differentiate violent loss from other types of death loss.
3. Integrate client-centered principles into one's practice to better serve families impacted by violence death.

## Medical Examiner's & Coroner's Office: Innovative approach to supporting families following the sudden death of their child

Presented by: [Kristin James](#)

While every single child's death is tragic, the challenges for families whose child suffered a sudden or traumatic death are even greater. After a violent or unexpected death, often the only point of interaction with a support system is with the Medical Examiner/Coroner's Office. Bereaved parents and siblings are at a higher risk for complicated grief, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), chronic disease, and even early death. And yet, these families are often overlooked, isolated and alone to navigate their grief journey. This session will share an innovative model that bridges the gap between the ME/Coroner Setting and community-based grief services. This model also acknowledges the impact of a pediatric death on the ME/Coroner's Office and First Responders and supports their wellbeing. While this model specifically addresses pediatric death, it is easily transferable to adult loss.

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Define the role of the ME/Coroner's Office and the most common causes of death
2. Describe the unique needs of families and barriers to support following a sudden, traumatic death
3. Identify opportunities for partnerships with specialized grief services and social supports across the continuum of care

## David Schonfeld, MD

David J Schonfeld, MD is a developmental-behavioral pediatrician and director of the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement (NCSCB). He holds a joint appointment at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. In 2005, Schonfeld established and directs the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement ([www.schoolcrisiscenter.org](http://www.schoolcrisiscenter.org)), located at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. He is Professor of Clinical Pediatrics at Keck School of Medicine. Prior faculty positions have been in the Department of Pediatrics at Yale University School of Medicine; Head of the Section of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center; and Pediatrician-in-Chief at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children and Chair of Pediatrics at Drexel University School of Medicine.

For over 30 years, he has provided consultation and training to schools on supporting students and staff at times of crisis and loss in the aftermath of numerous school crisis events and disasters within the United States and abroad

Dr. Schonfeld frequently speaks (with over 1,000 presentations) on the topics of crisis and loss and has authored more than 150 scholarly articles, book chapters, and books. He has conducted school-based research (funded by NICHD, NIMH, NIDA, the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, William T Grant Foundation, and other foundations) involving children's understanding of and adjustment to serious illness and death and school-based interventions to promote adjustment and risk prevention. Dr. Schonfeld is a member of the Executive Committee of the American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Children and Disasters and the National Biodefense Science Board. He served as a Commissioner for both the National Commission on Children and Disasters and the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission in CT. He served as President of the Society for Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics from 2006-7.

## Monique Mitchell, PhD, FT

Monique B. Mitchell, PhD, FT is the Director of Training and Translational Research and the National Director of the L.Y.G.H.T. program at Dougy Center. She has more than 20 years of experience serving youth who are grieving. Her experience includes conducting child-centered translational research on the lived experience of children and youth in foster care, teaching undergraduate and graduate courses on loss and grief, and developing youth-centered curricula to serve youth who are grieving. Her specific expertise includes life transitions, loss and grief, trauma, ambiguity, and youth empowerment.

## Jamie Schwellenbach, LPC-C, R-DMT

Jamie Schwellenbach, LCPC-C, R-DMT, is the Center for Grieving Children's Coordinator of the Tender Living Care Program and assists in the delivery of the Intercultural Peer Support Program. Jamie brings a wealth of experience working with children and families in a variety of educational and therapeutic settings. She was a math and physics teacher at Catherine McAuley High School in Portland, Maine for more than 10 years prior to completing her Master's in counseling and dance movement therapy at Lesley University. Prior to coming to the Center in 2019, Jamie has most recently held clinical positions at Pathways Merrymeeting Center and Woodfords Family Services, where she supported children with special needs and their families.

## Stephanie Heitkemper, MA, MFT, LPC, RPT, FT

Stephanie Heitkemper, MA MFT, LPC, RPT, FT is the owner of Resilient Minds Counseling which specializes in working with children and families around change including grief, and trauma. Stephanie finds energy in utilizing play, creative expression and bibliotherapy in her counseling practice, program creation and presentations. Stephanie is the Camp Therapist for Camp Jojo. Camp Jojo focus' on supporting teens who have been impacted by suicide in a unique model that weaves grief support plus mental health education along hands on adventure. Stephanie has served on the board of directors for HeartLight Center, a Denver Based grief support and education center since 2017. Stephanie has been an active volunteer with Comfort Zone Camp bereavement camps for over a decade. In 2020, Stephanie was awarded her Fellow in Thanatology. Stephanie is passionate about grief education and is currently in her second year of pursuing her PhD in Counseling and Psychological Studies with an emphasis in Grief. Stephanie's selfcare includes early morning CrossFit workouts and exploring Colorado with her husband and two boxers.

## Debra Albo-Steiger, LCSW

Debra Albo-Steiger has 20 years of experience in education, advocacy, and social service administration. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Michigan with an emphasis on child development and her Master of Social Work degree from the University of Chicago. Deb is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in Illinois and Florida and holds a certificate as a School Social Worker.

Deb began her career as a School Social Worker in the Chicago Public Schools assigned to communities with high gang violence. Upon moving back to Miami, Deb was a clinical therapist for Jewish Community Services focused on couples counseling as well as providing therapy to children, teens, and adults both in individual and family settings. Prior to starting her position with the CBC, Deb worked for 9 years as the District Homeless Liaison for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, serving as the Director of Community Outreach for Project UP-START. She was the co-chair of the Youth Homeless Working Group under the Homeless Trust as well as a co-chair of the Youth Homeless Initiative for the HOMY Collective for six years and was the Superintendent's designee for the Homeless Trust Board. Deb has presented at state and national conferences including the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth as well as presented on webinars through a national partner, School House Connection, speaking about best practices in assisting children and youth experiencing unstable housing. Deb's effort to successfully transition homeless high school students to post-secondary institutions was featured in a publication by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness highlighting the accomplishments of many former homeless students who successfully became college graduates. Since joining the CBC, Deb has partnered with the public schools to increase grief support for students and staff.

### Allison Mahon, M.Ed

Allison Mahon is the Program Coordinator for the Drew's Hope grief support program for children, teens and families. She earned her M.Ed. with a Certification in K-12 School Counseling through Shippensburg University of PA and is an Elementary School Counselor. Allison also serves as an adjunct faculty member, teaching Grief and Loss Counseling and Counseling Children courses. Currently, she is pursuing a Doctoral Degree in Counseling Education and Supervision. Her research interests for her dissertation are children and families who have experienced a loss and improving counselor competency in the realm of grief and loss.

### Samantha Anthony, MS

Samantha Anthony is a grief clinician based in Philadelphia. She has a MS in Clinical and Counseling Psychology and recently passed the National Counselor Exam .

She works at Uplift Center for Grieving Children and previously worked with the School District of Philadelphia. She has a vested interest in the interconnected areas of education and childhood mental health, as well as culture and accessibility in mental health.

As an immigrant who moved to the United States 10 years ago she believes her diverse background feeds her passion for identifying culturally accessible mental health services for diverse populations.

### Debbie Meyer, MNM

Debbie Meyer has extensive background in leading nonprofits, as the executive director for Erin's House for Grieving Children. She also spent a year as the marketing director for an Indy 500 race car driver and has over 20 years experience in corporate marketing. Debbie has written and obtained over \$15-million dollars in grants for nonprofits and her church, she also rose over \$2.75 million in a capital campaign for Erin's House. She has built a 14,000 sq. ft. home for Erin's House, the only stand-alone children's grief center in the state of Indiana. Debbie served as a board member and on the executive committee for the National Alliance of Children Grieving. She has also served as a board member for Cancer Services for Northeast Indiana, Visiting Nurse & Hospice, and Leadership Fort Wayne. She has earned an Associate's degree in Organizational Leadership from Purdue University, a Bachelor's degree in Business Management from Indiana Wesleyan University, and a Master's degree in Nonprofit Administration from the University of Central Florida...obtaining all of these while working full-time and raising a young family.

### Pamela Gabbay. EdD, FT

Dr. Pamela Gabbay is a nationally recognized trainer and consultant who has served the bereavement field in many capacities during her 25 year career. She is a co-founder of The Satori Group, an organization providing education and consultation to the end-of-life, death, and bereavement fields. Dr. Gabbay is part of the training corps for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) and is the co-author, along with Andy McNiel, of Understanding and Supporting Bereaved Children: A Practical Guide for Professionals. Previously, Dr. Gabbay was the Director of the Mourning Star Center and Camp

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Erin-Palm Springs, where she worked extensively with bereaved children, teens, and their families. She was also an adjunct faculty member in the psychology department at Brandman University. Additionally, she served as the President of the Southern California Chapter of the Association for Death Education and Counseling, as well as the Vice President of the Board of Directors of the National Alliance for Children's Grief (NACG).

Dr. Gabbay holds a Fellow in Thanatology (FT) from the Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) and earned a Master of Arts degree in Cognitive Psychology from Claremont Graduate University. She earned her Doctor of Education degree in Organizational Leadership from Brandman University. Dr. Gabbay was included in Hospice Foundation of America's Living with Grief Helping Adolescents Cope with Grief and Beyond Kubler-Ross: New Perspectives on Death, Dying, and Grief. She currently serves on the executive committee of the Credentialing Council for the Association for Death Education and Counseling. She conducts nationwide trainings and presentations for organizations including: the TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing, ADEC, NACG, the Compassionate Friends, the Childhood Grief and Traumatic Loss conference, Hospice Foundation of America, and the American Association of Suicidology.

### Jillian Blueford, PhD, LPC, NCC, CT

Dr. Jillian Blueford is a Clinical Assistant Professor for the school counseling program at the University of Denver, a Licensed Professional Counselor in Colorado, and is Certified in Thanatology (Death, Dying, and Bereavement). Dr. Blueford began her thanatology journey as a counselor intern at a hospice bereavement center, which sparked a lifelong commitment to serving grieving individuals. Over the years, Dr. Blueford has continued to provide grief counseling to individuals of all backgrounds in various settings, including schools, outpatient facilities, residential hospitals, and currently in private practice in the Denver area. Further, Dr. Blueford is a grief and loss scholar, who has conducted research and scholarship via her dissertation, peer-reviewed publications, book chapters, webinars, podcast features, and several regional, national, and international presentations. Seeking that all counseling professionals are equipped and competent in grief counseling, Dr. Blueford works with other educators and clinicians as Co-Chair of the Grief Counseling Competencies Task Force to develop critical competencies for the training programs.

### Carrie Bauer, BSW, MS

For the past 15 years, I have worked in both hospice bereavement programs and a funeral home bereavement organization, and during this time I have seen first-hand how rewarding end-of-life and bereavement work can be, but I have also seen how it can take a toll on those providing care. During my time working in the grief field, I have learned how important it is to recognize our own burnout and how to grow from our experiences. I developed the T.A.C.O. worksheet while working at a funeral home and what first was a joke between co-workers and me, it became a useful tool that professionals can use to remind themselves to practice good self-care. I have presented on various grief issues at both the local and national level on several occasions, and some topics I have presented on include: Helping Children Learn to Cope with Grief & Trauma, The Importance of Youth & Funerals, Understanding Children and

## 2020 National Symposium on Children's Grief Session Abstracts and Bios

Grief, and many others. I have presented at ADEC Annual Conference, NAGC Annual Symposium, National Funeral Directors Association's Annual Convention, several colleges and universities, and various webinars.

### Lauren Raney, LCPC, ATR

Lauren is the Program Director of Willow House and the Clinical Site Coordinator for the Expressive arts group and General Loss group. Willow House is a non-profit organization that provides grief support services to children, families, and the community. She is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and Registered Art Therapist. Lauren was drawn to the grief and bereavement community due to her own loss of her mom as a young adult, and her passion for helping others through life's rawest moments. Lauren has her Master's Degree in Counseling and Art Therapy from Adler University in Chicago and her Bachelor's Degree in Studio Arts/Painting from Illinois State University. Lauren has previous experience working as the Children's Grief Coordinator and Bereavement Counselor at JourneyCare Hospice where she facilitated grief support groups and directed a week-long bereavement camp for children and families. She has also spent time as an Art Therapist at Chicago Children's Center for Behavioral Health working with children and teens who have experienced trauma, grief, and mental health diagnosis. When words aren't enough, Lauren enjoys using the creative process with families and children to help them honor and remember their person while coping and processing their loss in a meaningful way. In her free time, she enjoys painting, dancing, yoga, and being out in nature.

### Dr. Karen Scott

Dr. Karen S. Scott is the co-founder, Director of Program Development and Executive Director Emeritus of Lost & Found Grief Center in Springfield, MO. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Certified Trauma Specialist with 30 years' experience as a grief therapist, working with individuals, families and groups. She developed programs for children and adults at Lost & Found Grief Center, oversees the therapeutic grief support groups at the center and is a frequent speaker and writer on the topics of grief, grief support, and crisis response. Karen has developed numerous community partnerships to enhance support for grieving families, assisting Lost & Found Grief Center in offering comprehensive services.

### Tashel Bordere, PhD, CT

Tashel C. Bordere, PhD, CT, is an Assistant Professor of Human Development and Family Studies and State Extension Specialist in Youth Development at the University of Missouri-Columbia. She has developed and taught courses in Death, Dying, and Bereavement, Black Families, Adolescent Development, and Parent-Child Interaction. She is the past editor of the *The Forum*: quarterly publication of the Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC). She has served on the ADEC Board of Directors, as past Chair of the People of Color/Multicultural Committee, and is a member of the National Alliance for Grieving Children, Society for Research in Child Development, and the National Council on Family Relations. Dr. Bordere is a speaker, youth and family social justice advocate,

researcher, and author of works relating to diversity and resilience through loss and grief, including *Adolescents and Homicide* and "The remedy is NOT working": Seeking socially just and culturally conscientious practices in bereavement, a co-authored work, in *Grief and Bereavement in Contemporary Society*. She is a Certified Thanatologist (Death, Dying, and Grief Education).

## Tina Barrett, LCPC

Dr. Tina Barrett, LCPC, is the Executive Director of Tamarack Grief Resource Center, a nonprofit bereavement center in Montana that offers grief support, grief education, and counseling services.

Dr. Tina Barrett has over 20 years of experience with end-of-life and grief support programs and non-profit management. Since 1994, she has specialized in family systems, strength-oriented outdoor-based support following grief and trauma. Barrett is a licensed-counselor with experience in schools, psychiatric hospitals, treatment centers, group homes, and private practice. She is the Founder/Executive Director of Tamarack Grief Resource Center in Montana. Barrett serves on the Advisory Committee for the National Bereavement Camp Standards of Practice; on the Advisory Board and as a Senior Consultant for Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS); and on the National Alliance for Grieving Children (NAGC) Board of Directors

## Meredith Cooper, MA, CCLS, LPC

Former Executive Director and Co-Founder Meredith Cooper envisioned, launched and grew *Wonders & Worries* from its beginnings in 2001. Following 15 years of success, Meredith stepped into a founder role in 2017, where she continues providing strategic direction for national growth and programmatic initiatives. Meredith has a bachelor's and a master's degree in Child Development. She is a certified Child Life Specialist and a Licensed Professional Counselor who has been involved with children's healthcare in the Austin community for more than 25 years, including being the first pediatric oncology child life specialist for Austin. In 2010 Meredith received the Helping Hand Home's Champion for Children Award and the Girl Scout Woman of Distinction Award in 2013. Meredith is married with one son, two daughters and four grandsons and three granddaughters.

## Lane Pease, MS, NCC

Lane Pease Hendricks is the Director of Programs at Kate's Club in Atlanta, GA. Lane oversees the quality of all programs offered to Kate's Club members and their families. She also leads KC Connects, the outreach program of Kate's Club. She trains professionals in Georgia and nationally on working with grieving children, young adults, and families. She is a National Training Associate with the Boys and Girls Club of America, serves on the editorial board of the American Cancer Society and on the Education Committee of the National Alliance for Grieving Children. Lane is the co-author of "We Come Together as One: Helping Families Grieve, Share, and Heal the Kate's Club Way". Personally, she raised two grieving children who are now young adults. Lane holds a BA in Philosophy from Georgia State University

and a MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Mercer University. She lives in Tucker, GA with her husband.

### Michele Post, MA, LMFT

Michelle Post, MA, LMFT, is a licensed mental health provider for CA residents and a national & international life strategist & business coach (virtual telehealth services). She has specialized in grief, loss and trauma since 2003 and is mentored by J William Worden, Ph.D. in his group of S.CAL Bereavement Specialists since 2004, and is a former Board Member of NACG. Since 2007, Michelle deepened her focus on stress management & burnout prevention for professionals, and in 2019, she left her corporate healthcare management role to launch her own international business to coach others via live & online trainings, self-care retreats, provide expert testimony, and to travel to teach and consult. Then, along came 2020! Oh my! You can read more about her story and professional credentials at: [www.PostInternationalInc.com](http://www.PostInternationalInc.com) and [www.PostFamilyCounseling.com](http://www.PostFamilyCounseling.com). Michelle uses transparency, vulnerability, and personal experience in her teaching like the fact that her friends nicknamed her Los Angeles home, 'The Magical Fun Palace' before she added her bicoastal home in Jacksonville Florida where she lives, gardens, paints, cooks, and records her weekly podcast "Keeping Your Sh\*t Together in a Stressed World" with her colleague, Scott Grossberg, Esq.

### Ashley Jesse, MA, LPC-S

Ashley Jesse, MA, LPC-S is Program Manager for Grief Education and Clinical Training at the Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas (CBCST). She also provides bereavement services at Paloma Place, a satellite office of CBCST, where she is a therapist working with children affected by the Sutherland Springs tragedy. She is a member of the Sutherland Springs Collaborative, a coalition of agencies working together to aid victims. She specializes in trauma, grief, anxiety, and Depression using EMDR, CBT, play and sandtray therapy, and group therapy. She has over twelve years of experience in the mental health field and received her Master of Arts degree in 2006 from Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, LA.

### Amanda Sahli, MS, LAMFT

Amanda is the Bereavement Coordinator at Phoenix Children's Hospital, and the Pediatric Bereavement Counselor for Hospice of the Valley. She has worked in grief and loss for her thirteen-year career as a marriage and family counselor and child therapist. Amanda is Phoenix native and avid University of Arizona hockey fan. In her down time, she enjoys cuddling with her two cats and dog, and boyfriend (Hotchy) while binge watching Netflix or reading non-grief related books. She is passionate about supporting grieving families as well as educating clinicians and the community about how to care for and support grieving people.

## Adam Carter , PhD

Adam W. Carter, Ph.D., joined the NACG in 2021 as National Clinical Director. He is a professional counselor and counselor educator who received his doctoral degree in Counselor Education and Supervision, with an emphasis in multicultural counseling, from The University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Adam has taught courses in CACREP accredited master's level clinical mental health programs and doctoral level courses in counselor education and supervision and served as the Trauma-Informed Counseling Graduate Certificate coordinator at Northern Illinois University. During his time at Northern Illinois University, he founded the Center for Grief and Loss at the University's Community Counseling and Training Center, where he provided clinical supervision and education to counselors in training. Adam has an ongoing program of research and scholarship that focuses on early childhood grief responses and preparing counselors-in-training to work with grieving children. Adam's scholarly work also includes numerous peer-reviewed presentations focusing on topics such as trauma-informed counseling, play therapy, and developing research skills in counseling practitioners. His clinical experience is broad, having worked as a counselor and supervisor in community mental health clinics, in-home intensive settings, community advocacy agencies, and private practice. In 2014, Adam was one of two inaugural Scholars-in-Residence with the American Counseling Association and helped develop strategies for empowering clinicians to conduct single-subject design research in community settings. In the fall of 2020, Adam was acknowledged for his work in the field of grief counseling and death education by earning the designation of Fellow in Thanatology: Death, Dying, and Bereavement.

## Lisa Aman

Lisa Aman joined Kate's Club as its Executive Director in March of 2021. She received her Bachelors of Arts in Economics from Yale University and her Masters of Business Administration from Stanford University. Prior to joining Kate's Club, Lisa was a management consultant, advisor to start-ups and political candidates, and served on nonprofit boards focused on closing the opportunity gap that many Atlanta area children and families face. She has worked with several organizations to grow and advance their mission by building strategies that bring together and optimize the four key communities within an organization: the team, those you serve, and those who support and partner with you. Lisa has presented at conferences on topics such as developing and energizing teams and boards, building public awareness and a diverse support base, and creating collaborative alliances with multiple stakeholders.

## Donna Schuurman, EdD, FT

Dr. Schuurman's 31-year tenure at Dougy Center has included publishing, training, and community responses following natural and human-caused disasters around the world. She was a Founding Board Member of the NAGC, the recipient of the Association for Death Education's Annual Service Award and Clinical Practice Award, and is the proud owner of a Harley-Davidson Heritage Softail which she bought on a break at the 2012 NACG Orlando symposium. She advocates widely for the de-pathologizing of people who are grieving, and finds solace in her 3-year-old friends and her two Persian kittens, Satu and Suki.

## Lauren Schneider, LCSW

Lauren, a nationally recognized expert on Child & Adolescent Grief, has directed the Children's Programs for OUR HOUSE Grief Support Center for 18 years. In that role Lauren provides trainings for mental health clinicians, educators, clergy, health care providers and graduate students throughout the community equipping them to work with grieving clients. Lauren is the author of "Children Grieve Too: A Handbook for Parents of Grieving Children" and contributing author of "You Can't Do It Alone: A Widow's Journey through Grief and Life After". She also created "My Memory Book...for grieving children". Lauren is an Associate Producer of "One Last Hug...and a few smooches" an Emmy award winning HBO documentary about Children's Grief. Lauren is the recipient of the 2017 Dr. Michael Durfee Award and the 2014 H.U.G. award. In her free time Lauren enjoys playing with her grandsons, cooking and nature walks. Lauren maintains a private practice in Los Angeles specializing in grief and trauma.

## Meghan O'Mahoney, M.S., Ed., CT

Meghan O'Mahoney, M.S., Ed., CT is the volunteer services coordinator, child grief specialist at Highmark Caring Place, Warrendale. For the past eleven years, Meghan has built a volunteer team of over 200 volunteers. She is responsible for recruiting, training, and placing volunteers in a variety of roles in addition to coordinating events to recognize her team. Meghan oversees the facilitation of peer support groups for children and teens ages 0-18 and adults who have suffered the death of a loved one. Prior to her work at the Caring Place, Meghan worked in the mental health/drug and alcohol field for 12 years. Meghan earned her Master of Science in education from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA and became Certified in Thanatology in 2017. Meghan is currently a member of the Association for Death Education and Counseling and the NAGC, PA Association for Volunteer Healthcare Resource Professionals, and Volunteer Administrators of Southwest PA. In her spare time, Meghan enjoys walking, yoga, and traveling.

## Corrie Sirota, MSW

Corrie Sirota holds a Masters degree in Social Work from McGill University, (Montreal, Canada) as well as a Graduate Certificate in Loss and Bereavement where she continues to teach. As a licensed psychotherapist, Corrie maintains a private practice specializing in Loss and Bereavement, Parenting, Stress management, and Relationship issues. She is the author of "Someone Died...Now What – A personal and professional perspective on coping with grief and loss" and "Loss & Found – A grief activity journal" Corrie is also the Clinical Director of Myra's Kids Foundation which holds a weekend bereavement camp for children ages 6-17.

Corrie is the co-host of Life Unrehearsed - a weekly radio show on CJAD 800 about the ins and outs of everyday life. She is also a well-known guest speaker, having presented at numerous conferences and workshops, both locally and nationally and continues to develop and facilitate psycho-social prevention and intervention workshops for school professionals, students, camping staff, various community agencies, organizations and businesses. Some of her recent presentations have included Creating a

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Positive Reality, The Art of Giving Feedback, The Pressure to Be Perfect, How to Run Effective Parent/Teacher Conferences, The Secret to De-stress and When Bad Things Happen to Good Students.

Corrie is frequently interviewed on many local radio, news and TV programs on various issues relating to loss and bereavement, how to cope with crisis, child development and parenting.

## Sydney Ford

Sydney Ford is a graduate of the University of South Carolina with a degree in Public Relations, and a graduate of the Emory University School of Law where she obtained her juris doctorate degree. She is currently a juvenile defense attorney and followed this path because of the number of grieving children involved in the juvenile justice system. Sydney's article on trauma-informed pretrial diversion programs for our grieving youth in the juvenile justice system was recently selected for publication by the Northwestern Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology Online. She has also recently testified for the South Carolina Joint Committee on Children about getting grief resources for children into South Carolina schools.

Sydney wrote and published her own children's book, "Grief Came to Visit Today," and created a nonprofit, "Hope After Grief Inc.," that provides scholarships to high school seniors who have had a parent or sibling die. Sydney lost her dad when she was 10 years and became an advocate for grieving children at age 16 when she began going into elementary schools and talking to classes about the emotions associated with grief. Since that time, she has found ways to support grieving children by fundraising for the National Alliance for Children's Grief, becoming a buddy and ambassador for Kate's Club, and meeting with Senators and the South Carolina Superintendent of Education to advocate for our grieving youth.

## Kiri Meyer, MS, LPC, NCC, RYT

Kiri Meyer MS, LPC, NCC, RYT is a Licensed Professional Counselor in Wisconsin specializing in grief and trauma. She is also a Registered Yoga Teacher focusing on trauma-sensitive yoga for grief and mental health. Kiri has been a grief camp enthusiast for the past 13 years, working and volunteering for camps in Wisconsin, throughout the US, and in Ireland. She is currently a Bereavement Coordinator at Horizon HomeCare & Hospice's Grief Resource Center. Kiri has dedicated her professional life to helping advocate, educate, and introduce people into the world of death, dying, and bereavement so we are able to have these "tough talks" in a more comfortable fashion as a society.

## Michelle Gonzalez, MS

Michelle Gonzalez, MS, received a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Minor in Sociology from Montclair State University as well as a Master's degree in Community Trauma Counseling from Thomas Jefferson University, where she was inducted into the Honor Society. A bilingual speaker of English and Spanish, Michelle has a background in working with adults and adolescents with a trauma focused lens. Michelle has a wealth of experience working with bereaved youth and their caregivers in both school

and community settings and now works as the Bilingual School and Community Clinician at Uplift Center for Grieving Children in Philadelphia. Michelle is a strong believer in connecting students and families with other students and families. "We do not heal in isolation; We heal in connection"

### Barb Kamlet, LPC

Barb Kamlet, LPC, is a co-founder and Executive Director of Shimmering Wings, a nonprofit organization that provides grief support and education to individuals who have experienced a childhood death loss. She is Director of Camp Erin Denver as well as Next PAGE, an overnight camp for adult caregivers of grieving children. Barb is a grief counselor for a Denver based hospice and has a private practice specializing in grief and loss. She earned her Masters in Counseling Degree from Regis University and served on the faculty of the NHPCO Clinical Team Conference for three consecutive years.

### Mandi Zucker, MSW, CT

Mandi Zucker is the Founder and President of Inner Harbor, an organization dedicated to supporting grieving students on college campuses and beyond. With almost 25 years of experience in end of life care, grief and bereavement, Ms. Zucker brings with her a broad knowledge base pertaining to young adult grief. She has experience in public schools, hospice and non-profit work and understands the specific challenges faced by young people as they make difficult transitions from home to college.

Ms. Zucker serves as a Lead Responder for the Traumatic Loss Coalition of NJ where she responds in the immediate aftermath of a student death to provide psychological first aid to staff and peers. She is also a seasoned presenter, speaking on topics such as suicide loss, supporting peers and students after a death, COVID and loss, and engaging clients of all ages in the therapeutic relationship.

### Andy McNiel, MA

Andy McNiel has had the honor of providing care and support to bereaved children, teenagers, adults, and families for the past three decades. He previously served as Chief Executive Officer of the National Alliance for Grieving Children, as Executive Director for The Amelia Center in Birmingham, Alabama, and as Director of Counseling Services for Treasure Coast Hospice in South Florida. He currently serves as Senior Advisor for Youth Programs and Young Adult Programs for the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS). He is also an Executive Advisor for The Compassionate Friends, and Operations Advisor for HealGrief and Actively Moving Forward (AMF). Andy is the co-author of Understanding and Supporting Bereaved Children: A Practical Guide for Professionals. He lectures extensively across the United States on topics related to grief, bereavement, and non-profit management. Andy is a trainer for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. He is a member of the International Workgroup on Death, Dying, and Bereavement and has served on the Board of Directors for the Association for Death Education and Counseling and the National Alliance for Grieving Children.

## Meagan Rides At The Door, PhD, LCPC

Maegan Rides at the Door, PhD, LCPC, Director and Principal Investigator, National Native Children's Trauma Center. As Director of the National Native Children's Trauma Center, Maegan Rides at the Door has had a key role in designing and implementing a range of training and technical assistance initiatives in tribal communities, including projects for trauma-informed systems change in mental health, child welfare, and educational settings, as well as projects focusing on juvenile justice reform and suicide prevention. Her background is in mental health clinical counseling, having worked with children of all ages and adults in various settings. She is an enrolled member of the Assiniboine-Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation and a descendent of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma.

## Karin Douglas

Karin Douglas has worked as a consultant, instructor and speaker, providing guidance to clients in the corporate and philanthropic communities and throughout the nonprofit sector in human services, the arts, and education. She has held external relations positions at Davidson College, UNC-Chapel Hill, Duke University, Georgia Tech, Children's Defense Fund and Communities in Schools of Georgia. For two years she served as fundraising subject-matter expert for the in-house consulting team at Georgia Center for Nonprofits and was a top-rated instructor at their Nonprofit University. She currently serves on the boards of Georgia Center for Opportunity and Georgia Farmers Market Association.

## Sarah DeCosta

Sarah DeCosta was a grief counselor at HopeHealth since September 2016 and has recently been promoted to grief support manager in August of 2021. Additionally, she is the director of Camp BraveHeart, a 2-day summer camp program for bereaved children and teens. Camp BraveHeart has been ongoing in Rhode Island for the past 15 years and Sarah has since developed an additional program in Massachusetts. During the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, Sarah ran the Camp BraveHeart program completely virtually over the course of 4 days. She also facilitates other children's grief support programming including groups, family days, presentations, etc. All of which she is now experienced running virtually in addition to in person. Although her passion is working with children and teens, Sarah is also experienced in working with adults and has been running a COVID-19 grief support group since the beginning of the pandemic. Sarah completed her MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Rhode Island College with high honors and plans to become a Licensed Mental Health Counselor with a specialization in children's grief.

## Nadine Gariepy-Fisk, MA PGDipPT, CPT, CCC, ACTA

Nadine worked in pediatric oncology in Montreal before entering the world of palliative care and bereavement counselling at two Marie Curie Cancer Care hospices in South East England in 2001. She later was appointed as National Family Bereavement Services Coordinator overseeing the grief support offered in 10 hospices before joining Hospice Calgary as a counsellor in 2008.

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Since 2012, Nadine is the Director of the Children's Grief Centre where she leads a team of mental health professionals who provide counselling and support to grieving children, adolescents and families. Committed to building capacity for better supports for grieving families, she offers training to health and mental health care professionals, schools, police and victims services, and others. Nadine is an active contributor to the development of grief services, guidelines, and tools at the local, provincial and national level. She is a founding member of the Canadian Alliance for Grieving Children & Youth.

Nadine has a BA Psychology from McGill University, a MA Child Study from Concordia University, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Play Therapy from Roehampton University, London, UK.

### Michaeleen (Micki) Burns, PhD

Michaeleen (Micki) Burns, PhD, is the Chief Clinical Officer at Judi's House/JAG Institute and adjunct faculty at the University of Colorado. JH/JAG is a comprehensive family bereavement center in Denver. A Licensed Psychologist with two decades of experience providing therapeutic assessment and support to families facing adversity, Micki has witnessed the lasting impact of unaddressed grief. She is dedicated to ensuring appropriate care is available for all and raising childhood bereavement to a level of critical public importance. At JH/JAG she oversees the direct service, research, and training departments working towards a vision where no child is alone in grief.

### Dana Minor, MS, CSC, LPC

Dana Minor is the Program Director at The WARM Place, a grief support center for children, in Fort Worth, TX. She started at The WARM Place in 1994 and has served as a houseparent, facilitator, monitor, and group director. Dana has over 25 years of experience working in children's bereavement and began her work at El Tesoro de la Vida Grief Camp. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Certified School Counselor. Dana served on the Speaker's Bureau for the National Center for Youth Issues and teaches a variety of courses in the field of psychology at Tarrant County College.

### Maureen Patterson-Fede, LICSW

Maureen Patterson-Fede, LICSW is the Program Manager of the Good Grief Program. Maureen has worked with children and families in a variety of settings and has learned that they deeply benefit from kind, empathetic, and attentive care that is led by their needs and illuminates their strengths and resiliency. In her work with the Good Grief Program, Maureen provides therapy, consultation, and support services to caregivers and their children in the wake of an acute loss. Maureen also works collaboratively with community partners to provide training on supporting the resiliency and well-being of grieving children.

## Thomas Demaria, PhD

Thomas Demaria, Ph.D. is Fellow of both the Trauma and Clinical Divisions of the American Psychological Association, serves on the Professional Advisory Board for the National Center for School Crisis & Bereavement and is involved in training initiatives for the Coalition to Support Grieving Students. Dr. Demaria has earned numerous awards including the New York State Liberty Award and a Humanitarian Award by the Center for Christian & Jewish studies for leading national and community disaster responses. Dr. Demaria was a co-recipient of International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies' Award for Clinical Excellence and was recognized with a Distinguished Mentor Award for his teaching in the field of trauma. Dr. Demaria has developed over one hundred research studies in the fields of trauma and loss.

## Juliette Martinez, MSW

Juliette Martinez, MSW is the South Carolina State Director of the L.Y.G.H.T program. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice in 2017 and her Master of Science in Social work in 2019 from the University of South Carolina. Her education and career have always focused on her passion for working with children and families. Throughout her career, she's gained experience serving youth in foster care. This includes being a L.Y.G.H.T. program facilitator for both teens and young adults. Her experience also includes supporting L.Y.G.H.T. facilitators at multiple community sites across South Carolina.

## Christine Linnehan, LCPC, BC-DMT, FT®

Christine Linnehan, LCPC, BC-DMT, FT is a licensed clinical professional counselor specializing in grief, loss, and trauma. She has been a clinical consultant at The Center for Grieving Children for 18 years providing staff and facilitator support on nights of service as well as annual facilitator retreats.

Christine is certified in thanatology and somatic trauma therapy. Her work is grounded in evidence-informed trauma and bereavement-informed approaches. Drawing from her training as a board-certified dance/movement therapist, she utilizes mind/body and expressive arts practices designed to promote resilience and wellbeing. Christine is active in suicide prevention/postvention efforts nationally and facilitates the annual International Survivor of Suicide Loss Day in Maine. She has a special interest in the impact of suicide loss on children and families.

## Heather LaBouy

## Daniel Sheridan, PhD

Dr. Daniel Sheridan is a licensed psychologist and the Clinical Director for the Children's Bereavement Center. Dr. Sheridan is trained in both clinical work and empirical research. Clinically, he has provided therapeutic support to children and adults in both individual and group settings. Dr. Sheridan is also a

published author and invited presenter at both national conferences and community agencies within South Florida. As Clinical Director for the Children's Bereavement Center, Dr. Sheridan is responsible for the CBC Peer Support Group Services, community outreach and training, and the dissemination of CBC outcome research.

## Marcie Taylor

Marcie Taylor co-founded the Drew Michael Taylor Foundation with her husband, Randy, after the death of their three-year-old son in a June 2006 auto accident. Marcie retired from teaching to devote herself to the grieving families served through the foundation's grief support programs. She oversees the day-to-day operations of the DMTF, serves as the Family Services Coordinator for the Drew's Hope grief support program, leads several adult grief support groups and speaks throughout South Central Pennsylvania on a variety of grief-related topics. Marcie obtained a Certificate in Thanatology from Hood College in Frederick, MD in 2012.

## Lynn Snyder, LPC, ATR-BC, FT

Lynn M. Snyder, LPC, ATR-BC, FT is the Founder and Executive Director of Common Ground Grief Center located in Manasquan, New Jersey. The center is dedicated to supporting children, teenagers, young adults and their family members who have experienced the death of a parent/adult caregiver or sibling. Lynn is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Registered, Board Certified Art Therapist, and holds a Fellow in Thanatology (FT) from the Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC). In addition to her position as Executive Director at Common Ground, Lynn supervises graduate students and provides skill training to new volunteers. Lynn is an active member of the community, continually working to build relationships with organizations and schools. She has presented both locally and nationally including: NACG, the Compassionate Friends, ADEC, ASAP-NJ, American Counseling Association, Rutgers University, and many local schools and hospitals throughout New Jersey.

Lynn is a 2014 Women of Achievement Award recipient sponsored by the State Federation of Women's Clubs and Douglas Residential College as well as a 2015 nominee for First Lady Mary Pat Christie's New Jersey Heroes. Lynn was part of the adjunct faculty at Monmouth University, where she designed and taught a course on children's grief for their graduate mental health counseling program. Lynn recently completed her first children's book, *Little Ruby's Big Change: Talking with Children About Loss, Change and Hope*. The book was written in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in order to help children better understand and make sense of what was happening during the pandemic. *Little Ruby's Big Change* has been used in schools and other organizations that support children.

## Mickayla Bedenian, LSW

Mickayla Bedenian is the Program Associate and a clinical site coordinator at Willow House. She began her journey with Willow House as an intern. Willow House is a non-profit organization that provides grief support services to children, families, and the community. She is a Licensed Social Worker.

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Mickayla felt connected to the Willow House mission and bereavement after her own experience of loss and seeing the opportunity to normalize grief and support children and families at such a difficult time. Mickayla holds a Masters of Social Work from Aurora University and a Bachelors' Degree in Psychology: Counseling Psychology with a minor in sociology from Trinity International University.

### Nicole Kellen

Nicole Kellen is the Director of Community Engagement for Mid America Transplant, an Organ Procurement Organization in Saint Louis, MO. In her current role, Nicole is responsible for the execution of Community Outreach efforts in the OPO's designated service area encompassing 84 counties in Southeastern Missouri, Northwest Arkansas and Southern Illinois. Outreach efforts include: secondary and post-secondary school education, faith-based education, DMV partnerships and affiliated non-profit organizations to increase participation in the state and national registry. During her tenure at Mid America Transplant, Nicole has had the privilege to work with over 10,000 donor and recipient families through the operational oversight of the Aftercare Program which supports families before, during and after the donation and transplantation process. Through her work with the Mid America Transplant Foundation's Community Grant Program, Nicole and her team have partnered with 5 Grief Centers throughout their service region to help ensure families have the option of extended grief services following the loss of a loved one.

### Mary Alice Varga, PhD

Dr. Mary Alice Varga is an Associate Professor of Educational Research in the Department of Leadership, Research, and School Improvement in the College of Education. She is also the Director of the School Improvement Doctoral Program. Dr. Varga teaches graduate-level courses on quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research methodology; program evaluation; and school and classroom assessment. She also serves on doctoral dissertation committees throughout the College of Education. Her primary research focuses on student grief and bereavement. She also examines online learning environments and computer-mediated communication. Dr. Varga is a member of the Association for Death Education and Counseling and the Southern Association for College Student Affairs. She is also an Associate Editor for the *College Student Affairs Journal* and serves on the Editorial Board for *Illness, Crisis, and Loss*.

### Kim Fryar

Kim has been a child life specialist for 30 years this month!. She started her career at Children's Medical Center in Dallas then moved to Austin and joined the Wonders & Worries team in 2002. Wonders & Worries provides support to children and teens when a parent faces a serious illness and regularly supports families facing a parent's terminal prognosis. Kim now serves as Wonders & Worries national program director, a role that provides her the privilege of overseeing W&W's virtual services including the W&W's Helpline and Registered Wonders & Worries Provider (RWWP) program. Kim holds a

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bachelor's degree in Family Relations and Child Development from Oklahoma State University and two Masters' degrees, one in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Alabama and the other in Counseling with a play therapy emphasis from the University of North Texas. Kim is a Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS) and a National Certified Counselor (NCC).

Kim is married to her high school sweetheart, who proposed underwater while they were scuba diving. They have a 21 yo daughter, a 19 yo son and a spoiled Australian shepherd. Kim is adventurous and loves the outdoors. She is a certified scuba diver, avid hiker, snow skier, water skier and has jumped out of a plane. She also enjoys relaxing with a good book.

### Lisa E. Schmitt,

Lisa joined the New Song staff in 2001 after serving three years on the board of directors and brings a background in PR, marketing and advertising. Asking "What if?" and "What's next?" are her favorite questions to pose to her colleagues as they meet the needs of grieving children and families. She enjoys playing with her pups and flexing her thumb in her garden. Designing and sewing classical ballet costumes and wedding gowns, singing in her Church choir or hiking the mountain trails, keep her busy. Her favorite of all is spending time with family, and especially her first grandchild Charlotte.

### Debra Brook

Debra Brook has been with Kate's Club since 2010 and is currently the Director of Volunteer Services and Camp Good Mourning. She received her Bachelors of Science in Recreation with an emphasis in Therapeutic Recreation from the University of Florida. She is certified through the National Council of Therapeutic Recreation and received a Certificate of Nonprofit Volunteer Management from Georgia Center for Nonprofits.

### Carolyn Christ, MA, AMFT

Carolyn is an Associate Marriage & Family Therapist working with children, adolescents, and families who seek services through OUR HOUSE. Carolyn is the coordinator of the OUR HOUSE School Program, collaborating with school personnel and district officials to continue to grow the school-based grief support program and deepen school partnerships. She provides training for mental health clinicians, educators, health care providers, and graduate students throughout the community to help prepare them to work with grieving clients. Carolyn also maintains a small therapy practice with adults, teens, and adolescents.

## Dr. Ryan Kilmer

Dr. Ryan P. Kilmer is Professor of Psychology, Director of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' Social Aspects of Health Initiative, and Senior Fellow for Faculty Engagement in the Office of Urban Research and Community Engagement at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. A community and child clinical psychologist, his work has focused on children and families and: (1) understanding factors influencing the development of children at-risk for emotional, behavioral, and/or academic difficulties, particularly risk and resilience and youngsters' adjustment to trauma; and (2) using evaluation to refine programs, improve service delivery, and guide system change and local policy.

Dr. Kilmer has partnered with diverse community stakeholders, directing or co-directing projects that respond to community needs, functioning on collaborative teams, and mentoring early career professionals and students. His evaluation and applied research experiences include efforts funded by the National Institute of Mental Health and the Institute of Education Sciences and extend across areas and populations, including mental health, child welfare, education, public housing, early childhood, and integrated care. Across these efforts, he has sought to improve the services and supports provided to children and families, many of whom have traditionally been marginalized or underserved. In his trauma work, he has worked with UNC Charlotte and U.S. colleagues as well as researchers from Norway, The Netherlands, and Chile.

His broader professional involvements – including as President of the Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice – demonstrate his investment in social justice and child and family well-being. He is a Fellow of the Society for Community Research and Action and, at UNC Charlotte, he has been honored for his teaching, training, and community engagement with the Bonnie E. Cone Early-Career Professorship in Teaching, the Harshini V. de Silva Graduate Mentoring Award, and the Provost's Faculty Award for Community Engagement.

## Bethany Gardner

## Laura Landry, PhD

Laura Landry, PhD is the Director of Evaluation and Research at Judi's House/JAG Institute. She has 15 years' experience evaluating community-based programs and large-scale prevention initiatives as well as building the capacity of organizations to utilize data to drive decisions. In addition to heading the organization's Childhood Bereavement Changemaker Initiative, Laura oversees the Evaluation and Research Department. Her work focuses on evaluating Judi's House services, building evaluation/data utilization capacity in the field, and disseminating the prevalence of childhood bereavement to inform advocates and practitioners working in the field.

## Minelia Rodriguez

Minelia Rodriguez is a bi-lingual (Spanish/English) mental health clinician, who provides consultation and therapeutic services at the Good Grief Program. Through the Good Grief Program, Minelia is able to provide trauma and grief interventions to children and families when they've experienced a significant loss. Minelia is passionate about providing service access to families in neighborhoods of lower socioeconomic status and where there are disproportionate rates of community violence. Minelia is especially interested in increasing service access for Spanish-speaking families, immigrant families, and families who are experiencing significant barriers to mental health treatment.

## Barb Kamlet, LPC

Barb Kamlet, LPC, is a co-founder and Executive Director of Shimmering Wings, a nonprofit organization that provides grief support and education to individuals who have experienced a childhood death loss. She is Director of Camp Erin Denver as well as Next PAGE, an overnight camp for adult caregivers of grieving children. Barb is a grief counselor for a Denver based hospice and has a private practice specializing in grief and loss. She earned her Masters in Counseling Degree from Regis University and served on the faculty of the NHPCO Clinical Team Conference for three consecutive years.

## Kristin James

Kristin James is the Executive Director for the Greater Illinois Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition (GIPPCC) and co-founder of Missing Pieces Child Loss Network. She currently serves on the National Coalition for Hospice & Palliative Care Pediatric Task Force. She has specialized in working with families coping with illness, trauma and loss for over twenty-five years. Kristin has provided clinical consultation and extensive training, advocacy and education to medical teams, community agencies, funeral professionals, and school systems. She is an experienced clinician and has provided individual, family, and group counseling. Kristin developed a benchmarked program for Pediatric Bereavement Care at Lurie Children's Hospital and is nationally recognized as an expert in child loss. She has also participated in and published numerous research studies. Ms. James received her Master's in counseling from Loyola University Chicago.