

THE GRIEF BRIEF

2016 Holiday Issue



Emma's Place
Staten Island Grief Center for
Children and Families



Support ~ Community ~ Hope

A Penny for Your Thoughts

Have you thought about: making a difference, helping those in need, and assisting a family who is grieving the loss of a loved one? Then how about a penny for your thoughts?

Emma's Place is reaching out to the Staten Island community to join us in commemorating Children's Grief Awareness Day, Thursday, November 17th, and sponsoring a penny drive. Children's Grief Awareness Day is designed to help us all become more aware of the needs of grieving children — and of the benefits they obtain through the support of others. For more information visit www.childrensgriefawarenessday.org

To conduct a penny drive, contact Emma's Place at **347.850.2322**, and we will deliver a special jar designated for the penny drive. Leave the jar in a prominent place and watch the jar fill up as people drop in their pennies to support Emma's Place, and grieving children in the Staten Island community. At the end of November, Emma's Place will pick up the jars. The funds collected will help support the programs of Emma's Place and buy supplies.

In addition to the wonderful feeling of knowing you've made a difference to bereaved individuals and schools who participate in the penny drive will receive special certificates, and businesses who participate will receive a special thank you letter.

If you cannot participate in the penny drive, you can still support Children's Grief Awareness Day by wearing blue on November 17th. If you have any other ideas to support Children's Grief Awareness Day we would love to hear your "two cents"!

Hope for the Holidays

Gratitude, cheer, family, joy. These are all words that surround us in stores, in the media, and in conversations with others when the holidays start drawing near. But for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one; dread, sadness, emptiness, and loneliness are often the words they associate with the holidays and the bereaved often ask themselves, "How will I ever get through this time?" In answer to this question, Emma's Place wants to share some suggestions to help you cope with the holidays and find some comfort and meaning:

- **Talk** about how you're feeling with others who you will be spending the holidays with who also share your loss. Children should also be included in these types of conversations at a level they can understand. It's more upsetting and anxiety-provoking for both children and adults to go on pretending that everything is the same, when it is clearly not, or to not give children the space to address how the holidays are different this year for them.
- **Remember** your loved one by creating a new holiday tradition. These can include, lighting a candle at the holiday or planting a seed in honor of your loved one; playing a song prior to the start of your holiday meal that was meaningful to your loved one; make or buy your loved one's favorite dish and having everyone at the table share a special memory of the loved one before eating.
- **Be Gentle** with yourself. It's Ok if you are not up to doing what you usually do during the holidays. If you usually host a holiday gathering, it's OK if you suggest someone else do it, or that you all go to a restaurant instead. Make sure you give to yourself. Remember the old oxygen mask analogy. On an airplane they always tell you in case of an emergency put your own oxygen mask on before helping anyone else.

November, 2016
Volume 2, Issue 2

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At Emma's Place you will

- Be supported by those who have journeyed through their own path of grief.
- Find a community of welcoming, caring and committed individuals who will listen.
- Learn healthy grief processing in a private, safe-setting which facilitates healing while offering the hope and tools to move forward to a meaningful life.

*"What is to give
light must endure
burning."
-Victor Frankl*

Emma's Place Schedule

Emma's Place
Staten Island Grief & Loss
Center for Children and
Families

276 Watchogue Road
Staten Island, NY

www.emmasplacesi.com

Contact us at:

Telephone: 347.850.2322

E-mail:

info@emmasplacesi.org

Support~Community~Hope



We rely on you.

Our Center is supported through donations, grants, memorials and bequests; which will allow us to provide these services at no cost to the children and families it serves.

There are a variety of ways to support Emma's Place and to help reach grieving children and families. We are currently looking for a permanent, cozy home for Emma's Place. Anyone with knowledge of a safe, house or building for rent or as a donation would be greatly appreciated.

Donations can be made out directly to Staten Island Grief Center and mailed to Emma's Place, 276 Watchogue Road Staten Island, NY 10314 . Emma's Place staff members are available to make presentations or talk further on the phone – please contact us at 347-850-2322 or

info@emmasplacesi.org

We greatly appreciate your generosity!

CHILDREN'S GROUPS

1st & 3rd Tuesdays

Ages 4-9 5:30 pm

Ages 10-14 6:30 pm

Ages 15-19 7:30 pm

ADULT GROUPS

1st & 3rd
Thursdays
7:00 pm

Read more about Emma's Place at: [Staten Island Live Column](#) or see us on [Facebook](#)

Special Message from Dr. Carolyn Oglio-Taverner

One of the first things you recognize when you work with grieving children is that there are no "kid-sized" emotions. Any child old enough to love is old enough to grieve. What they lack is the vocabulary to explain what they are feeling in a way adults can understand. Children grieve in a manner and time that is most appropriate for them, and is typically out of sync with where adults are in their grief. Children can grieve intermittently for many years. Depending on their age, children may not manifest grief symptoms until years after a loss. When children's grief symptoms do occur, many are behavioral. They may become aggressive or withdrawn; overly dependent and clingy; or mischievous and irritable. Grades may plummet or favorite activities may no longer hold their interest. This can happen immediately after or several months or years after a loss. This can be especially prevalent during the holidays when nothing feels right without their loved one and everyone's emotions are heightened.

Children are as worried about you as you are about them. They bear witness to all the intense emotions grief brings to the adults in their lives and do not want to add to the sadness. They might make sure not to talk about the deceased in front of you, and may be the one holding your hand or being strong. This does not mean they are not grieving. Many will cry in private or turn to other means of expression to work through their emotions such as writing, art, or play. These can be wonderful ways to connect with your child and share memories – make an ornament in honor of your loved one; write a holiday card for them or involve the child in creating new traditions that include the memory of their loved one. The most important thing is to keep communication open but this can be more difficult than imagined. As adults we rarely know what to say to other grieving adults, and it is far worse when adults are trying to talk to children. Mostly, children want life to get back to normal and their reactions reflect this desire.

Despite their different levels of understanding and unique reactions and coping skills, that children display at different ages, the best way to help a grieving child is to be there, and to know how it feels to lose someone or something you love and to recognize that in them. There is no greater honor than being entrusted with a child's story, for they do not give it lightly. When you can spare a few extra moments, or stop and answer the myriad of questions, or stand steadfast through the flood of emotions, you provide a voice to a population that we often fail to listen to as closely as we should. For with every little hand held, or tear dried, a difference is made. The smallest gestures mean the world to a grieving child. To be seen and recognized as a mourner is a powerful, life changing event.

Emma's Place Supports Our Troops

Thank you to Boy Scout Troop 19 for reaching out to and inviting Emma's Place for grief counseling and grief education for your community members. It was an honor to be there.



[Boy Scouts of America 19 - Staten Island NY](#) September 14, 2016

"Thank you to [Emma's Place - Staten Island Grief & Loss Center for Children & Families](#) for joining Troop and Crew 19 tonight at our first meeting of the year.

Over the Summer we lost one of our Scouts at the age of 13 and it was very helpful for us to talk about it tonight as a Unit".