

# THE GRIEF BRIEF

## 2018 Holiday Issue



### Emma's Place

Staten Island Grief Center for Children and Families



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Volume 4, Issue 4

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### Emma's Place Honors Children's Grief Awareness Month in November



- **One out of 20 children** will experience the loss of a parent before they graduate high school. This number is much higher if you include those who experience the death of a brother or sister, a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, or a friend.
- **One in five children** will experience the death of someone close to them by age 18. (Kenneth Doka, Editor of OMEGA, Journal of Death and Dying, 2012).
- **Seven in 10 teachers** (69%) currently have at least one child in their class(es) who has lost a parent, guardian, sibling, or close friend in the past year. (Grieving in Schools: Nationwide Survey among Classroom Teachers on Childhood

Bereavement conducted by NY Life Foundation and American Federation of Teachers, 2012)

Many of us picture childhood as a time of innocence and fun, but these statistics show that for the majority of children, pain and loss are also part of their youth. Any child who is old enough to love, is old enough to grieve, but their grief manifests differently from adults. It is crucial to the healthy growth and development of these children that they receive services to address their grief. Emma's Place is committed to doing just that by providing grief support for children's and families, and training, education, and support for members of the community who interact with grieving children. In order to raise awareness regarding childhood grief, Emma's Place asked the community to wear blue on November 15<sup>th</sup> to honor Children's Grief Awareness Day. To learn more, access [Children's Grief Awareness Day](#).



#### 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



**Balloon Release** An important component of helping children process grief is to perform rituals to remember their loved ones, and Show them that they can still maintain a relationship with their lost



Loved one. Emma's Place helped children do these two things by sponsoring a Balloon Release on Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup>. Children were given biodegradable balloons, with the slogan, "You are loved, You are missed, You are remembered", written on them. Children, along with their surviving parent or grandparent, then wrote their own note to their lost loved one. On the count of three, the children let go of their balloons, watched them as they floated away, drifting in the sky, beyond the clouds towards their loved ones



## Emma's Place Schedule

### CHILDREN'S GROUPS

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays

Ages 5-9 5:30 pm

Ages 10-14 5:30 pm

Ages 15-19 TBA

### ADULT GROUPS

TBA

PARENTS GROUP

Coinciding with  
Children's Groups at  
5:30 pm

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

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### We rely on you

Our Center is supported through donations, grants, memorials and bequests; which will allow us to provide grief services, at no cost, to children and families in the community. 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, 1076 Forest Avenue Staten Island, NY 10314, or through [www.emmasplacesi.org](http://www.emmasplacesi.org).

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](mailto:info@emmasplacesi.org)

We greatly appreciate  
your generosity!

### HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

With all the beauty and joy of the holiday season, the holidays also bring their share of stresses and challenges under the best of circumstances. For grieving children and families, the holidays are often anticipated with a sense of dread and trepidation. Bereaved individuals ask themselves, "How am I ever going to get through the holidays? While we know there are no easy answers to this question, we hope it helps to know that Emma's Place is here for bereaved families during the holiday season, and we also would like to offer some suggestions to help you and your family navigate the holiday season:

- Allow yourself to feel any feelings that are coming up. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Grief is as individual as people themselves.
- Know that you have the right to say no to invitations of well-meaning friends and relatives.
- Find a way to make your loved one a part of your holiday celebration. Below is an example of an activity you can do with your children to do just that:
  1. Prior to the holiday create pictures, clay pieces, or find stickers that represent the special gifts that your loved one has given to you, and the special qualities your loved one had, such as going to plays together, teaching you how to ride a bicycle, making you laugh when you were in a bad mood, being very kind, etc.
  2. Then put the pictures and objects you created into a gift box.
  3. Decorate the box to represent something special about your loved one.
  4. Wrap the gift box and tie it with a bow, and save it for your gift-giving holiday.
  5. On the holiday, open the box along with the other presents, and you will be able to feel the presence of your loved one and all the wonderful gifts that they have given you, and the box is a reminder that these things are always with you.

### Community Conferences

#### *Suicide Loss Survivors-A Family Grief Experience*

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, area professionals, Emma's Place staff, volunteers, and bereaved members of the community gathered at the offices of Parent to Parent to attend Emma's Place 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Grief Conference. Barbara Rubel a suicide-loss survivor whose father killed himself while she was pregnant with triplets, facilitated the program. Ms. Rubel has dedicated her life to suicide awareness and prevention. During this program, Barbara shared her personal experiences, and through a powerful presentation, and interactive exercises, she helped participants explore how grief after a suicide is different from other types of losses. Participants were provided with information that allowed them to identify 25 determinants that influence the grief process after a suicide. At the end of the conference, attendees were shown how to find meaning in their loss, and given an activity to build their resilience. It was a meaningful morning of compassion, community, and growth.



*United Federation of Teachers (UFT) Community Conference* – On Saturday November 10<sup>th</sup>, Emma's Place, along with many other community organizations presented at a conference sponsored by the UFT and the City of New York to provide information about critical community resources. The conference was attended by school personnel, community parents, and other Staten Island support services. Emma's Place educated participants on how to help a grieving child. Emma's Place founders, Karen Goldman, and Dr. Carolyn Taverner explained how Emma's Place can meet the needs of bereaved children by:

- Helping children express and label their emotions.
  - Facilitating grief support groups where grieving children can meet others just like them
  - Showing them ways to memorialize their loved one such as looking at pictures and videos and creating memory boxes to help them honor and maintain a relationship with their lost loved one.
- Emma's Place is committed to its mission of being the primary grief resource to the Staten Island community and is available for future presentations.