



A NEWSLETTER FOR THE KENTUCKY CENTER FOR GRIEVING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES GROWING THROUGH GRIEF

SUMMER 2025

Partnership With The Kentucky Horse Park

We are grateful for the KCGCF's partnership with the Kentucky Horse Park that offers a unique and healing experience for families navigating grief. These free programs create a one-of-a-kind environment where children, teens, and caregivers can engage in meaningful, positive experiences together. Designed for families who have experienced loss, the Horse Park Program connects participants with horses to create a calm and welcoming atmosphere that fosters emotional healing through hands-on interaction. For younger children, crafts and games are offered and little ones get to interact with the Horse Park's mini horses. Older children build confidence by working directly with the therapy horses. Participants learn skills such as grooming, haltering, and groundwork. With a focus on connection and emotional support, the Horse Park Program at KCGCF is a powerful way for families to rediscover joy and resilience—together.





Interview with Angelina Antonaccio

Angelina Antonaccio, head of education for the Kentucky Horse Park leads this program. Her journey with horses began at the age of seven, when she says she “caught the bug early on—loving horses, and it never left.” With a deep passion for both horses and helping others, Antonaccio hopes this program can offer comfort to those coping with loss. The program has been designed with the understanding that the families participating are stepping out of their comfort zone and learning something new. Antonaccio hopes the program provides participants with a space to breathe, reflect, and find moments of peace through the calming presence of horses. Angelina’s biggest goal for this program is that everyone leaves with a smile on their face.





A Letter From the Director

We at the KCGCF are excited to have several new opportunities to expand our reach and serve children and families with loss in a variety of settings. We have been awarded funds as part of the state's System of Care work that will allow us to offer grief of non-death loss groups to support students with parental separation and those in kinship care settings. Additional funding from the Kentucky Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission means we can expand school-based services to Clark, Woodford, and Franklin Counties while continuing our school groups in Madison, Scott, and Fayette during the 2025-26 school year.

Closer to our home base, we have received funding from Fayette County's violence prevention organization ONE Lexington. With this support, we are creating an ongoing series of site based grief support and coping skills events in partnership with local African American churches.

For the families we work with at our Lexington-based grief support program, we have enjoyed a wide variety of therapeutic events this year. We've hosted equine events, a calming sound bath experience for the adults in our program, and art-based mandala meditative drawing classes. Healing looks and feels different for each individual, and one of our goals is to provide a variety of experiences so that families can discover what feels most healing and helpful for them.

Make sure to mark your calendars and buy tickets or a sponsorship for our September 14 bowling event. It's a fun and relaxed afternoon and your support makes a big difference for our grieving children and families.

In Service,
Leila Salisbury, Executive Director



Join us for our Fall 2025 Bowling Fundraiser!



**GET YOUR
TICKETS
TODAY!**



Mark your calendar! Our annual When Grief Strikes! bowling fundraiser is rolling back into town on Sunday, September 14, 2025. Join us for an afternoon of strikes and spares in support of grieving children and families across Central Kentucky. This family-friendly event promises fun for all ages, with registration including three hours of bowling, pizza and soft drinks, and exciting prizes. We're also currently welcoming event sponsors—a great opportunity for local businesses, community groups, and individuals to make a lasting impact while gaining recognition for their support. Sponsorships directly support our year-round programs that help children and teens navigate life after loss. If you're interested in sponsoring When Grief Strikes! or would like more information, call 859-813-2759 or email lnewsome@kcgcf.org.



Social Security Benefits for Children After the Death of a Parent

When a child experiences the loss of a parent, the emotional and financial impact can be significant. One important source of support is the Social Security Child Survivors Benefit, which provides monthly payments averaging about \$1,000 for a Kentucky Child to eligible children. Benefits are typically available until the child turns 18 or graduates from high school, and in some cases may extend to stepchildren, adopted children, grandchildren, and adults who became disabled before age 22. Applications must be completed by phone or in person, not online, by calling 1-800-772-1213. Contact the Social Security Administration as soon as possible, as the date of contact may affect when benefits begin. For more information, visit ssa.gov/survivor, or www.kcgcf.org/resources.

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