



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

SUMMER 2023 | VOLUME 4



FAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS GROUP FIELD TRIPS

As part of the end of year celebration for our two-year GEER Grant pilot with Fayette County Public Schools, the KCGCF worked with our family resource center coordinators and Life Adventure Center in Versailles to coordinate two field trip days. Our middle and high school students visited LAC in early May to participate in outdoor activities involving nature experiences, archery, and a huge balance bridge out in the woods. In early June, 35 elementary school students and school staff spent the day at LAC's equine therapy unit where the students got up close and personal with several wonderful horses. The students also participated in arts and crafts activities and outdoor games designed to teach and reinforce coping strategies. We were so grateful for these grant funds to be able to do these wonderful outdoor days with our grief group students from the past two years! It was also a great opportunity for students to see just how many peers had been involved in groups, and also to recall and practice strategies they've learned in their individual school groups. A big thank you to our partners for making these trips such a success!



THE KENTUCKY CENTER FOR
GRIEVING CHILDREN & FAMILIES

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN'S GRIEF CONFERENCE

KCGCF staff Leila Salisbury and Emily Johnson attended the annual Symposium of the National Alliance for Children's Grief in June. They had the opportunity to learn with more than 500 children's bereavement professionals from across the country, discussing new programs and activities and possible points of collaboration, especially for online programming.

Though only three years old, the KCGCF has built a program that successfully works alongside other longstanding centers. Clinical Program Manager, Emily Johnson, was featured on a panel with Judi's House, one of the country's leading children's bereavement centers, to discuss the KCGCF as a case study in how the center implements best practice data and assessment measures to evaluate the impact of the program.

The staff loves being a part of this vibrant and supportive national community. We are happy to be able to bring both proven and innovative programs and approaches to grief support to our children and teens in Kentucky.

The KCGCF provides in-person and online grief support groups for children and teens, at no cost to participants. For more information on how to enroll in our groups, visit our website at www.kcgcf.org or call 859-813-2759.

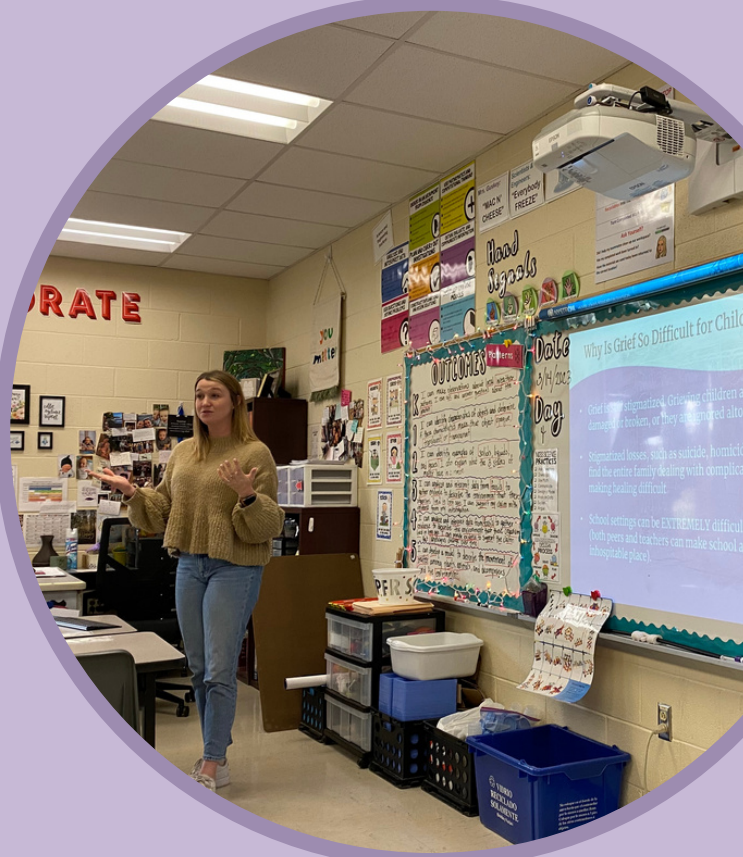


FAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS GRIEF SUPPORT PILOT PROGRAM

Our school-based grief support groups began in 2021 in Fayette County serving 7 schools, eventually expanding to 14 schools within FCPS. During the two year pilot, we served 215 students in our groups. All groups and family activities were free to participants.

"Now I know I'm not the only one." This was a common response from our school group participants. This in-school program is designed to support grieving children and teens with death loss (whether the death of parent, caregiver, peer, or other important adult). The program allows children to connect with other students with loss; learn how to identify the emotions related to their loss; and develop a set of positive coping skills that will help them move more healthfully through the long arc of their grief loss. The groups are an important way to provide students with peer connections, a safe environment in which to process stigmatized losses, and a better understanding of their own emotions and grief responses.

For many participants, school is the only place they might receive help for their losses. The KCGCF also offered teachers and student support staff trainings on best practices for grief support in the classroom and the greater school setting at each site hosting a group. The KCGCF also offered district-wide trainings for educators or student support professionals. The goal of these trainings is to help staff understand and implement best practices to support grieving students so they can experience better personal and school outcomes. The KCGCF is so grateful for this partnership with FCPS and our school sites, and we look forward to continuing this work to support even more Central Kentucky students.



THE KCGCF VISITS ANNIE'S ANSWER

KCGCF community group members enjoyed one of their July meeting nights getting an introduction to some amazing local horses and the staff of Annie's Answer Equine Assisted Therapy and Learning. Participants learned about how horses sense emotion, and they got to build small obstacle courses to lead the horses through. We loved getting to explore a fun new way to experience connection and support, and we're already looking forward to our next visit with both our human and equine friends at Annie's Answer!



"ALWAYS IN MY HEART" MORSE CODE BRACELETS

We are delighted to collaborate with the talented artist Lindsey Kindt of Coded Blessings. Lindsey has graciously designed a unique sterling Morse Code bracelet exclusively for the KCGCF community. Each bracelet bears the Morse Code message "Always In My Heart," serving as a tangible reminder of the enduring connection with a special person. With your generous contribution of \$50, you will receive one of these special bracelets (available with black, pink, or purple cording). A gift of \$100 will ensure that two bracelets find their way to you. We hope that wearing this bracelet will not only offer comfort but also serve as a powerful symbol of solidarity, reminding you that you are not alone in your grief. If you would like to donate your bracelet to a child who cannot afford one, let us know and we will be delighted to gift them with the bracelet from your contribution. [Click here](#) to donate and to see more information.



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