CAMP HOPE HELPS HEAL THROUGH FUN

Camp Hope, Niagara Hospice’s free bereavement camp, helps children cope with grief

Grieving the loss of a loved one is difficult for anyone, but it can be especially difficult for children. Children grieve differently than adults. To address the special needs of grieving children, the Bereavement Department of Niagara Hospice is offering its 16th Camp Hope for grieving children June 24 – June 26 at the YMCA’s Camp Kenan in Barker. Children ages 7 to 13 throughout Western New York who have had a significant life change or lost a loved one through death – whether or not they ever received hospice care – are invited to enjoy this free and fun camping weekend.

“It’s often difficult for children to speak about the losses and deaths they have experienced,” said Camp Hope Coordinator, Leann McConchie. “They find that most of the other children they socialize with have never experienced such a loss. Camp Hope provides these children with a unique opportunity to meet and talk with other children who are grieving, and also provides them with the coping tools they need to begin healing and to have a foundation from which to understand and cope with future losses.”

At Camp Hope children enjoy activities such as arts and crafts, music, swimming, S’mores around a bonfire, a dance party and more. McConchie said that during most activities children talk together about their losses, share thoughts and feelings with other campers, trained volunteers, and professional counselors, and come to recognize that grief is a natural response to losing a loved one. Together, campers learn positive ways to cope with loss, they learn to help each other, and they learn that they are not alone.

Camp Hope is staffed by professional counselors, trained volunteers and a nurse who is on hand for the entire weekend. During the camp weekend, children learn to express their grief through the many provided activities and a memorial bonfire.

About six weeks following camp, the children and their guardians will meet again with staff and volunteers for a Camp Hope reunion. Children will be given a camp yearbook to exchange signatures with their new friends.

For a free camp application, contact the Niagara Hospice bereavement department at CampHope@niagarahospice.com, (716) 280-0777 or visit the Services tab at www.NiagaraHospice.org for printable forms. Applications must be received by Monday, June 13. Applications are also available online for men and women 18 and older who are interested in volunteering for the camp weekend, whether it’s for a few hours or for the whole weekend. Call 280-0777 for more information and to apply.
Q: How does one deal with their grief over losing a parent as Mother’s Day and Father’s Day approach?

A: For many kids and adults who have lost a parent, these holidays can bring a sense of isolation as they cope privately with their grief while others happily celebrate with Mother's Day brunch specials, flower deliveries, and picnics.

So how do you help yourself or a loved one to cope? Following are some reflections on how to think about grief for Mother’s Day, or any holiday that magnifies the loss of what was — or could have been. Even those who did not have picture-perfect family memories often believe they could have repaired relations if they just had more time.

**Be patient.** Grief is not something that people just need to “get past.” We don't want to forget the person who died, but we’re in a society that says, “You need to move on, you need to put this behind you.” Don't make the mistake of believing the cliché that time heals all wounds. What heals wounds is tending to them.

**Listen.** People get hung up on what they should say. That's not the point. The grieving person needs someone to listen. As a society, we don't know how to just sit with someone and let them cry or let them reminisce. For those who are grieving, seek out those who want to hear your story, who want to hear about your loved one.

**Buy a Mother's Day or Father’s Day card.** Write the sentiments and message that you want to say. Death doesn’t end the relationship. It ends the ability to talk in the physical presence. Take the card to the cemetery, place it with the urn, or burn it – sending the thoughts and love into the universe.

**Create new rituals.** If your loved one is buried at a cemetery, make the holiday a day for a visit. Think about what your mother or father loved, and create an outing connected to that. It could be as simple as taking the kids for an ice cream sundae to celebrate their mom's love of ice cream.

**Let yourself feel what you feel.** Recognize that feelings of envy or sadness are normal when you see others celebrating. Parents should not hide their grief from their children. You can explain to them why you’re sad, and integrate these kinds of discussions through their lifetimes.

---

**Niagara Hospice Spring Remembrance Celebration**

**Thursday, May 26**

**6:00pm**

Niagara Hospice Dominic Lariccia Family Pavilion

Join us as we remember and celebrate the lives of loved ones who passed in the Niagara Hospice program during January 1, 2015 - June 30, 2015.

Invitations have been mailed.

RSVP to Rev. John Marshall
JMarshall@niagarahospice.org • 280-0768

---

*The only courage that matters is the kind that gets you from one moment to the next.*

- Mignon McLaughlin

---

Send a sympathy card. Again. Reach out to a grieving friend by letting them know that you are thinking of them and that Mother’s Day or Father’s Day may be a bittersweet day for them.

Adapted from a reprint of a blog from “The Dougy Center, The National Center for Grieving Children & Families”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>Support Group/Workshop</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, May 3</td>
<td>Bereavement Coffee Hour</td>
<td>10:30 - 11:30am</td>
<td>Lockport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, May 5</td>
<td>Bereavement Coffee Hour</td>
<td>10:30 - 11:30am</td>
<td>N. Tonawanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, May 3</td>
<td>Newly Bereaved Workshop</td>
<td>5:30 - 7:00pm</td>
<td>Lockport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, May 5</td>
<td>Newly Bereaved Workshop</td>
<td>1:30—3:00pm</td>
<td>N. Tonawanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, May 24</td>
<td>Growing Through Grief</td>
<td>5:30 - 6:30pm</td>
<td>Lockport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, May 26</td>
<td>Growing Through Grief</td>
<td>5:30 - 6:30 pm</td>
<td>N. Tonawanda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bereavement Coffee Hour**
Join us for coffee and friendship to socialize with others who have experienced loss. Coffee Hours are open to men and women of all ages at no charge.

**Growing through Grief**
A peer support group for adults grieving the loss of a loved one. Growing through Grief is open to men and women of all ages at no charge.

**Newly Bereaved Workshop**
This educational workshop is for those who have lost a loved one in the last one to three months. You will learn about the process of grief, common grief responses, and helpful suggestions for navigating this journey.

---

**Individual counseling is also available. Call (716) 280-0777 to register for workshops and groups, or for more information.**

---

**Camp Hope**
June 24-26
at the YMCA’s Camp Kenan in Barker.

CAMPHOPE

Offered to children throughout WNY who have lost a loved one through death - whether or not they ever received hospice care - the camp is FREE for children age 7 to 13.

Call the Niagara Hospice Bereavement Department at (716) 280-0777 for more information.

More information and application materials are also available on our website at www.NiagaraHospice.org

---

Join us for the third annual Hospice Gran Fondo bicycle ride! This is not a race, it is a ride through Niagara County to benefit the programs and services of Niagara Hospice. Registration & information at www.HospiceGranFondo.com
YOU can help others faced with serious illness…

Do you belong to a service group, faith community or other organization that would benefit from an educational Niagara Hospice presentation? Please call our Speakers Bureau line at 716-280-0742 with contact information, and help advocate for hospice services in Niagara County.

Caregiver Survey Alert

The Centers of Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has developed a family caregiver survey that helps assess patient and family experiences with hospice care. Much of the survey helps measure if caregivers received adequate training from hospice staff to care for their loved one. All hospice providers are required to participate in this national survey. Niagara Hospice has selected DSS Research to conduct our survey.

Family members designated as the primary caregiver for their loved one receive the survey by mail. Niagara Hospice encourages those family members to complete and return the survey as soon as possible. You may also receive a follow-up phone call if the survey is not received within a specific amount of time. We truly appreciate your taking the time to help us assess our services.

Niagara Hospice Bereavement Services

Hours: 8:30am - 4:30pm Monday - Friday

Phone: (716) 280-0777
TDD # for hearing impaired: 1-800-662-1220

Please visit www.NiagaraHospice.org for more information and resources.

Niagara Hospice is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Lockport Location:
Niagara Hospice Administrative Building
4675 Sunset Drive
Lockport, NY 14094

N. Tonawanda Temporary Location:
Northgate Health Care Facility
7264 Nash Road
North Tonawanda, NY 14120

If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, or you would like to stop receiving supportive bereavement calls, please contact us at: BereavementServices@niagarahospice.com or call (716) 280-0777.