



# Healing Hearts

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2017 ANNUAL REPORT



Children's Bereavement Center  
OF SOUTH TEXAS

# Our Mission

To foster healing for grieving children and youth, their families and the community.



## 2017 Year in Review

### RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Work began at the end of 2014 to open the Children's Bereavement Center-Rio Grande Valley. After receiving grant funding from Methodist Healthcare Ministries, Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation and New York Life Foundation, the Center's board and staff worked with a steering committee in the Valley to establish the new Center, which opened its doors February 16th. The 3,000-square-foot facility provides peer support groups and individual counseling for grieving children, teens, and their caregivers at no cost. During the ten months of 2017 in which CBC-RGV was operational, the new facility served 245 unduplicated clients. This number is expected to increase by 50% in 2018, to at least 360.

### NEW PROGRAM PROVIDES COMFORT AND HOPE

Over the years, the Center has received numerous requests to provide support for families who have received a serious or life-threatening diagnosis. These families have a great need for comfort, support, and guidance when faced with a future filled with doctor's visits, hospital stays, difficult treatments, and unknowable outcomes.

Until March of 2017, the San Antonio community did not have such a resource for children. Then,



thanks to a collaboration between the START Center for Cancer Care, Austin-based *Wonders & Worries*, and the Center, a unique program was started for area families whose lives are in turmoil.

Counseling and peer support groups for children 2-18 are provided by the staff at no charge. Offices are located at the START Center, 4383 Medical Drive. If you know someone in need of this service, contact *Wonders & Worries* at 210-307-4853.



## CENTER OFFERS NEW RESOURCE

During 2017, the Center celebrated the achievement of another goal – the creation of a resource booklet that can be used by teachers, nurses, doctors, parents – anyone who encounters, and wants to help, a grieving child. *Out Came the Sun* is a labor of love that was two years in the making. Now a reality, the book is being distributed to schools, hospitals, churches, pediatricians' offices and other organizations to provide useful information about how to support a child or young adult who is grieving the loss of a loved one. *Out Came the Sun* is designed to help by providing descriptions of appropriate grief reactions, warning signs to watch for, recommendations on how to handle different issues, plus on-line support referrals and helpful books and publications. To order your copy today, visit the website at [www.cbcst.org](http://www.cbcst.org).



## GROUP ADDED SPECIFICALLY FOR YOUNG ADULTS

In response to many requests, in 2017 the Center also launched a new group specifically for young adults. This monthly group is tailored to the needs of young adults, ages 18-24. Clinical staff recognized that the needs of this group differ significantly from those of the Teens Take On Grief group which provides peer support for grieving teens ages 14-18. Though still in the initial stages, response has been enthusiastic.

## GOING TO THE DOGS!



Two years ago, therapy dogs were added to peer support group activities. They were immediately received with enthusiasm, and their role expanded in 2017. Program staff noticed a transformation takes place at the Center whenever the therapy dogs arrive. Children and adults both seem to relax, and smiles appear. Program Director Tami Logsdon said, "It's a little like magic. Even when a child or adult is a little timid, they soon learn there is nothing to fear and are more interested in getting close to pet the dogs." In mid-2017, the animal assisted therapy teams expanded from helping during one peer support group to becoming a part of several additional groups.

## GRIEF CAMPS

In 2013, the Center began to offer grief camps to meet the needs of children unable to attend regular peer support group gatherings. Typically, the parents/caregivers of these children and adolescents work in the evening or lack reliable transportation. To meet the needs of these children, in summer 2017, the Center hosted three camps: Camp Heroes-Beyond the Walls, specifically for teens; Camp Heroes at Hermann Sons camp; and Camp Caterpillar, the first camp held at the new Center in the Rio Grande Valley. These camps provide children with freedom and the opportunity to concentrate on something other than their death loss. Grief specific camps give children the chance to form relationships with others who

are grieving, to ask - and receive straightforward answers to - questions that have been troubling them, and to develop coping skills necessary to process their grief in healthy ways.



## COMMUNITY CRISIS RESPONSE

The Center staff was recently called on to assist with the response to the church shooting in Sutherland Springs. Counselors from the Center provided guidance and support for teachers and counselors in both the La Vernia and Floresville schools. A PhD level counselor has continued to be on-site in the community since that time. The Children’s Bereavement Center, in partnership with the University of Texas-San Antonio’s Academy for Crisis and Trauma Training, is

pleased to announce the opening of Paloma Place, a counseling center in Wilson County. This collaborative partnership is funded in part through a grant from The Victims of Crime Act, Whataburger, a gift from the San Antonio Area Foundation and additional designated support from caring friends of the Center.

Paloma Place is a replication of our program established in 1997 but will also utilize innovative programming for children and families, and provide healing and recovery for those who have experienced the death of a loved one.

“We are all saddened by this tragedy that occurred only a few miles from our Center in San Antonio. We feel fortunate to have the expertise, resources, and earned confidence from leadership throughout Texas to respond to the needs of those who have been impacted by this tragic event.”

Marian Sokol, Executive Director. For more information please visit the Paloma Place website at [palomaplace.org](http://palomaplace.org).



## Goals and Results

The following goals have been set by the clinical staff for Healing Programs for Grieving Youth and are measured by semi-annual evaluation surveys.\*

- 90% of children will report that they found the program safe and supportive. (93%)
- 90% of children will report that they now feel less alone and isolated. (86%)
- 90% of caregivers, who report children with behavioral problems upon entering the program will report an improvement. (92%)
- 90% of caregivers, who report children with emotional problems upon entering the program will report an improvement. (95%)
- 90% of caregivers and children will report they have a better understanding of their grief. (89%)
- 90% of caregivers and children will report overall satisfaction with the program. (94%)

\* Actual levels of achievement for 2017 appear in parentheses.

# 2017 Program Service Numbers



**1,024**

**Peer Support Group  
Participants**

**CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVED:**

583 Individuals Served  
(7,603 Units of Service\*)

**ADULT CAREGIVERS:**

441 Individuals Served  
(5,381 Units of Service\*)



**1,472**

**Individual &  
Family Counseling**

**CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVED:**

260 Individuals Served  
(1,896 Units of Service\*)

**ADULT CAREGIVERS:**

70 Individuals Served  
(605 Units of Service\*)



**1,421**

**Family Assessments**

**CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVED:**

842 Individuals Served  
(1,667 Units of Service\*)

**ADULT CAREGIVERS:**

579 Individuals Served  
(1,051 Units of Service\*)

**TELEPHONE CALLS/CONSULTS:**

1,142 Individuals Served  
(184 Units of Service\*)



**185**

**Camps &  
External Groups**

**CAMP  
(CHILDREN & ADULTS SERVED):**

142 Individuals Served  
(3,146 Units of Service\*)

**EXTERNAL GROUPS:**

43 Children Served  
(224 Units of Service\*)



**110**

**Wonders & Worries**

**110 INDIVIDUALS SERVED**  
(307 Units of Service\*)



**5,628**

**Community Outreach**

**TRAINING, EDUCATION  
& OUTREACH**



**300**

**Family Workshops**

**300 INDIVIDUALS SERVED**  
(900 Units of Service\*)

**TOTALS:**

**7,809 Individuals for ALL programs and services**  
**36,601 Units of Service for ALL programs and services\***

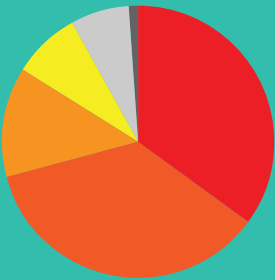
\* Each Unit of Service is based on a standard mental health hour of 50 minutes.



# FINANCIALS

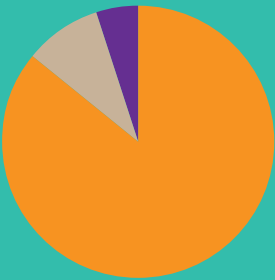
FISCAL YEAR: JANUARY 1, 2017 - DECEMBER 31, 2017

Revenue: \$2,216,095



- Individual & Corporate Contributions: 36%
- Grants & Foundations: 35%
- In-Kind Contributions: 13%
- Fundraising Events: 8%
- Other Income: 7%
- Program Fees: 1%

Expenses: \$2,271,802



- Program Services: 86%
- Management & General: 9%
- Fundraising: 5%

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