



Children's Bereavement Center
OF SOUTH TEXAS

205 West Olmos Drive, San Antonio, Texas 78212
(210) 736-4847



heart strings

FALL 2021



IN THIS ISSUE

A Wonderful Ribbon Cutting Celebration!

Understanding Grief in Teens & Young Adults

A Comforting Presence From a Special Volunteer

heart strings

FALL 2021



WE KEEP GROWING & HEALING HEARTS ALONG THE WAY!

Harvey Najim & Lisa Greehey Rosenbloom celebrated with us!

On August 26th staff and Board Members of Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas gathered with donors and friends in the community to celebrate the completion of a 600 square foot expansion. This expansion was driven by the need to create spaces welcoming to the teens and young adults who utilize our grief support services. Because we serve children ages 3-24, it was important to us that we have space that allows all children - including teens and young adults - to feel safe and supported.

This expansion added 8 counseling suites - all equipped with technology for telehealth counseling sessions, offices for administrative staff who had not officed together with program staff in 5 years, and a state-of-the-art training room for staff to host trainings and workshops for community professionals on various grief-related topics. With this expansion, capacity for annual counseling hours increased from 6,000 to 16,000, a truly incredible impact on our community.

The staff is so grateful to have completed this project during a truly difficult time filled with obstacles brought on by the global pandemic.

This expansion comes at a time when grief support services are needed most. So many children in our community are finding themselves with overlooked or residual grief as they navigate this new sense of normal to which we all are adapting. We are grateful



Holocaust survivor Rose Sherman-Williams with Marian Sokol

for the opportunity to continue to serve as a beacon of hope for these children and their families.

Thank you to everyone who made our dream a reality. Special recognition to Harvey Najim, the Greehey Family Foundation, and the Mays

Family Foundation for their transformative gifts that named our campus, our Home for Healing Hearts, and the Trauma and Grief Counseling Center. Together, we are shaping a brighter future for grieving children in our community!

HELP US HEAL HEARTS TODAY!

When you choose to donate, you help to fuel our mission and remind those grieving that they are not alone.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Roberto "Bobby" Rios – *Chairman*
Jimmie Keenan – *Vice Chairman*
Lauren Ferrero – *Secretary*
Connie Gilbert – *Treasurer*
Scott Gruendler – *Immediate Past Chair*
Mallory Ahl
Omar Akhil
Anthony "Tony" Bartys
Yonnie Blanchette
Tom Coyle
Craig Davis
Dana Deaton
Beverly Duke
Lauren Ferrero
Frances Gonzalez
Mary Ullmann Japhet
Manda Kelley
Scotty Macdaniel
James Maxey
Chris Rulon
Ryan Sullivan
Candace Tottenham
Debra F. Weems

ADVISORY BOARD

F. Michael & Jodi Wood – *Chairmen*
Janie & James Worth – *Vice Chairmen*
Margaret Berton, Ph.D.
Pat Bose
Carolyn Brown
Laura Nell & Trace Burton
Sallie & Barry Chasnoff
Mary Beth Fisk
Linda Fugit
Susan & Bill Galbreath
Julianna Hawn Holt
Janet & Boxy Hornberger
Susan & John Kerr
Kitty & Rich Lange
Paula Loring
Camille & Clark Mandigo III
Nancy Martin, Ph.D.
John Newman, Jr.
Jacqui Peace
Sally & Robert Sohn
Eliza Sonneland
Pam & David Thomas
Barbara Wood
Mertie Wood

FRIENDS OF THE CBCST BOARD

Jordan Williams - President
Mallory Ahl
Shelby Ames
Elizabeth Bartolomei
Sallie Chasnoff
Ashby Christian
Jennifer Cooney
Gretchen Cruthirds
Susie DeKoch, DDS
Ashley Friedman
Linda Fugit
Courtney Gerken
Ann Guerrero
Sarah Hodge
Sara Holliday
Stacy Hoyt
Catherine Jones
Jane Jordan
Shannon Kingman
Kitty Lange
Brooke Leddy
Kourtney Little
Mary Lou Vielock
Scotty Macdaniel
Kendall Mazurek
Emily McMurray
Caroline McSween
Meredith Michelson
Allison Mills
Scarlette Moorman
Emily Murdock
Lela Muzquiz
Rebecca Nathan
Ale Newton
Kristin Payne
Wesley Pennington
Lauren Pepping
Allison Pye, MD
Zoe Reilly
Eva Reza-Holliday
Michelle Sasser
Stephanie Sierra
Elizabeth Stephens
Lyn Swoboda Akhil
Christina Thompson
Elizabeth Vita
Janie Worth

DEAR FRIENDS,

I hope you and your families are staying safe and well!

As we continue our journey through this global pandemic, I encourage you to stop and think about all of the things for which you are grateful. Throughout this time of uncertainty many celebrations have been canceled, gatherings postponed, and meetings set virtual. All of this change can cloud our view and cause us to overlook the beautiful moments of our life.

One moment I am most grateful for is the opportunity to celebrate the Center's new expanded space. This

moment came with an immense amount of gratitude as I reflected on the number of families who will greatly benefit from the added counseling spaces. So many overlooked the grief of losing a loved one during the pandemic amidst all of the daily struggles they faced. With this in mind, it is likely that the Center will soon be filled with families in need of grief support.

As we continue to search for a sense of normalcy as a community, the Center remains a constant in the lives of so many. Every day I am grateful for the opportunity to support this wonderful organization. I hope you can find time to come visit the new space at the Center and see the healing

atmosphere for yourself. The project was a labor of love.

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, thank you for your continued support of our mission. Together, we can continue to heal hearts, one child at a time.

Sincerely,



Bobby Rios
CBCST Board Chair

ADDRESSING GRIEF IN TEENS & YOUNG ADULTS

Who am I? This is a question we often ask ourselves throughout our lifetime, with peaks during times of transition or change. Young adults are in a unique stage of life, full of changes, new experiences, and often increased responsibilities. However, when a special person in their life dies, they may grieve for that person, but also for the normalcy and comfort that existed pre-death. Many bereaved young adults have shared changes they were not expecting, including whose name to put as an emergency contact, who to call when they have questions about a leaky sink, and the recipe for Nana's famous banana cake. These secondary losses are often painful reminders that their special person has died.

Navigating grief and loss along with additional life stressors add to the ongoing question of "Who am I?". Young adults often find it challenging to find a peer support group that fits their needs; they are too old for a teen group, but too young for many adult groups. Yet,



they experience the same thoughts and emotions of grief following the death of a special person, including sadness, anxiety, sleeplessness, and loneliness.

Fortunately, at the Children's Bereavement Center, we have recognized the need for a specialized space focused on this diverse population. Recently, we were grateful for the opportunity to open our new expansion that included an environment focused on meeting the needs of teens and young adults. Our new addition allows for more individualized counseling spaces and an

expansion of our group services.

The Young Adult (YA) Group serves individuals 18-24+ who have experienced the death of a special person. Young adults are invited to share experiences, participate in creative expression, obtain peer support, receive psychoeducation, and provide empathy or a listening ear. Most of all, our peer support groups are designed to provide a non-judgmental space where bereaved individuals are invited to work through their grief.

The Center's Young Adult Group began on September 16th and will run throughout the Fall semester. For more information, please contact Program Supervisor, Michelle Guilmette Vaughn, LCSW at mguilmette-vaughn@cbcst.org.



Michelle Guilmette Vaughn, LCSW

LEARNING FROM COMMUNITY PROFESSIONALS

A large part of our work in the community involves education and sharing knowledge about children's grief. Our Grief Education Institute is an initiative that allows us the opportunity to host presentations

on various grief-related topics. These presentations are typically staff-led, but we also invite other community experts to share their knowledge.

Most recently, we invited Trauma and Grief Center Executive Director, Dr. Julie Kaplow to share her expertise on grieving youth. Dr. Kaplow's presentation titled, "Understanding & Supporting Grieving Youth: A Scientist-Practitioner Approach" took place on Friday, September 10th

via Zoom. The training allowed attendees the opportunity to connect with Dr. Kaplow and learn more about the adverse effects of children's grief if left untreated.

We are so honored to be able to provide access to mental health experts like Dr. Julie Kaplow to the community. Thank you to all who attended this powerful presentation! If you are interested in attending future presentations like this, join our mailing list to stay up to date on future events.

A LOVING VOLUNTEER PROVIDING HOPE & HEALING

Once a pediatric nurse at Santa Rosa Children's Hospital, Nancy Darrow has always had a calling to help and support children. After learning about our work at Children's Bereavement Center, Nancy was determined to be a part of the healing process and to support families facing devastating losses. Nancy started volunteering at the Center and has served as a greeter - welcoming families into our space as they wait to receive their grief services.



Nancy considers herself to be more of a grandmother figure, showing love and care to not only the clients but to staff as well. Serving as a greeter has allowed Nancy the opportunity to be a constant in the lives of families navigating the ever-changing chaos associated with their grief. Her comforting presence adds to the healing atmosphere

we have at the Center - a space where people can find comfort and compassion.

When she's not at the Center, Nancy continues to serve as an advocate, sharing about our mission to the community. We are so lucky to have volunteers like Nancy who have confidence in our mission and give their time so generously of their time to support the families we serve. Nancy shared,

“ It's easy to volunteer and it's life-changing for the families served. I encourage anyone interested in volunteering to visit the Center for yourself. ”

SAVE THE DATE!

TOUR OF THE HEART

First Friday of Every Month
11am - Noon

FREE to Attend

Visit give.cbcbst.org/touroftheheart to RSVP!

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S GRIEF AWARENESS MONTH

November 2020

Join us to raise awareness and wear **BLUE** to show your support!

BINGO AT THE BEREAVEMENT CENTER

Thursday, November 18, 2021
7pm-10pm

HEARTS IN HARMONY GALA

Thursday, February 17, 2022

For more information on these and other upcoming events, please visit CBCST.org/events.



Leave a Lasting Legacy & Create a Brighter Future

It's Easy. Your Legacy Can Begin Today!

When you include the Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas in your estate plans, you are joining us in our journey of providing hope and healing to grieving children. You are ensuring that no child today or any day in the future will have to walk the painful journey of grief alone.



MONARCH SOCIETY
A LEGACY GIRCLE OF THE CHILDREN'S BEREAVEMENT CENTER

For additional information, please contact Kristina Hernandez, Development Director at khernandez@cbcbst.org

 **Children's Bereavement Center**
OF SOUTH TEXAS