Continued growth is of great importance for Children’s Bereavement Center of South Texas. The impact of losing a loved one at any age can be profound, leaving vulnerable hearts with emotional scars. Through compassionate care aimed at children, the Center can extend its reach and ensure that more grieving children receive the guidance and care they so desperately need when they are ready. Additionally, continued growth allows the Center to expand our resources and enhance our programs, focusing on equipping staff with the tools necessary to cater to diverse needs and various complexities of grief. With each stride towards a new year, the staff at the Center remains certain we can secure a brighter future for the children we serve, offering them a safe place to express their emotions, heal, and rebuild their lives with hope and resilience.

“{quote}The Center’s journey has been nothing short of remarkable, nurturing and caring for grief-stricken children, fostering a future filled with healing and hope."{quote} — Marian Sokol, Chief Executive Officer

The Children’s Bereavement Center’s growth has been incredible, reaching more young hearts in need and providing solace amid unthinkable loss. As we forge ahead, our unwavering commitment to supporting grieving children and their families promises a future filled with compassion, understanding, and renewed hope for their healing journey.
Dear Friends

As I write this letter, I reflect on our challenges and accomplishments in 2022. Most impressionable is the pain and sadness of the Robb Elementary School tragedy, which took the lives of nineteen precious children and two talented teachers. We are honored to help the Uvalde community by creating a long-term Children’s Bereavement Center in Uvalde and are working closely with schools to provide grief counseling and support. We thank the many generous donors who made this momentous effort a reality.

On a celebratory note, 2022 marked the launch of Children’s Bereavement Center - Rio Grande Valley after six years of nurturing its growth. Now children in deep south Texas can access competent, caring counselors when death disrupts their lives.

In addition, we were showered with love in October at our 25th Anniversary luncheon, chaired by Barbara Wood, Jodi Wood, and Elizabeth Bright. The Board of Directors, Advisory Board, and Friends Board members have made the Center’s exponential growth possible as we brought on new clinical staff - each dedicated to helping us heal the hearts of many children in our community.

This necessary internal growth we’ve experienced confirms the ever-growing need for our services. So many children carry the heavy burden of their broken hearts alone, but we want to change that. We hope the Center continues to be a beacon of hope for families, a haven that allows them to express their grief. Each child who walks through our doors brings many memories of their loved ones. We hold each memory, each unique grief journey, close to our hearts and honor each special person’s life alongside the families we serve.

This has been another year filled with so much change, growth, and love. But the one thing that has not changed is our dedication to helping grieving children and their families heal. We have endless gratitude for each individual who chooses to support our work continuously. The work is hard, but working with generous people like you makes it possible.

Sincerely,

Marian
5,631 } Individual & Family Counseling Sessions

Individual counseling and peer support groups play vital roles in helping grieving children cope with the profound loss of a loved one.

In individual counseling, children have a safe and confidential space to express their emotions, explore their grief journey, and develop coping strategies tailored to their unique needs. Through one-on-one guidance from our trained clinicians, children receive personalized attention and support, fostering a sense of trust and understanding.

5,644 } Peer Support Group Visits

Peer support groups provide a powerful sense of belonging and validation as children connect with others who have experienced similar losses. In these groups, children can openly share their stories, listen to others' experiences, and feel comfortable knowing they are not alone in their grief.

Together, these therapeutic approaches provide children with a holistic support system, empowering them to process their grief, develop resilience, and navigate their healing journey with compassion and strength.
School Districts Served:
• Edgewood Independent School District
• Harlandale Independent School District
• Judson Independent School District
• Northside Independent School District
• San Antonio Independent School District
• South San Antonio Independent School District

School-Based Program
Our School-Based program helps grieving children across the city cope with losing a loved one. This program directly addresses the impact that grief can have on a child’s behavior in the classroom and their overall academic performance. Children can access readily available support through grief counseling within the school setting and conveniently woven into their daily routines.

This approach acknowledges that grief can manifest in various ways, such as behavioral issues or a decline in academic performance, which can hinder their overall well-being and educational progress.

Through school-based counseling, our trained clinicians work closely with children to create a safe space where they can express their emotions, develop healthy coping skills, and receive support tailored to their specific needs. By addressing the root causes of their distress and providing appropriate interventions, school-based grief counseling helps children navigate their grief. This work promotes emotional healing and ultimately allows them to thrive in the classroom, paving the way for a brighter future despite the difficulties they face.
Grief CAMPS

Our grief camps play a crucial role in supporting children who are navigating the profound loss of a loved one. With four camps held throughout the year, we can ensure that children and their families receive compassionate care while coping with their loss. Our Camp Heroes day camps take place in March and November at the Center, while our Summer Camp Heroes and Camp Cardinal both happen consecutively in July and August. Both Summer camps are overnight camps that provide a space for children to express themselves through a variety of expressive arts and physical activities like archery, fishing, sports, and swimming! Camp Cardinal is unique in that it allows families that have experienced the death of a parent to heal together.

Camps provide a safe, understanding, and fun environment where children can openly express their emotions, share their stories, and connect with peers who are also grappling with grief. By engaging in therapeutic activities and receiving guidance from our trained clinicians and caring volunteers, children learn healthy coping skills, gain a deeper understanding of their grief, and realize they are not alone in their journey.

The transformative power of grief camps lies in its ability to foster resilience, promote healing, and equip children with the necessary tools to navigate their grief and eventually find hope and joy in their lives.
Unduplicated clients at the Children’s Bereavement Center of South Texas refer to individual children or families who seek support and counseling services for their grief journey. Each encounter with these unduplicated clients is a precious opportunity to heal a broken heart. Every child or family member who walks through the center’s doors brings with them a unique story of loss and pain. The dedicated staff at the center recognizes the importance of tailoring their approach to meet the specific needs of each individual, providing personalized care, and fostering a safe and understanding environment. With compassionate guidance and therapeutic interventions, these encounters become transformative moments where children and families find comfort, understanding, and the tools to navigate their grief.

**2,218 Unduplicated Children & Caregivers in 2022**

By recognizing the distinctness of each client’s experience, the Children’s Bereavement Center ensures that no one feels overlooked or alone in their grief, thus offering hope and healing to mend their broken hearts.
IN 2022 WE CELEBRATED OUR 25th Anniversary!

It was 25 years ago in 1997 that the Center started healing the hearts of thousands of children in our community. Since the beginning, our unwavering commitment to ensuring no child walks the painful journey of grief alone has been at the forefront of our minds. The level of growth we have experienced since 1997 speaks to the ever growing demand for our services. Through our comprehensive programs including peer support groups, individual counseling, grief camps, and other specialized activities, we have been able to provide a safe haven for children to heal after experiencing difficult loss.

On October 27th, we gathered with some of our most dedicated supporters at the Mays Family Center at the Witte Museum to celebrate 25 years of service in our community.

The transformative impact of our work is evident in the countless number of lives that have been touched, offering a lifeline to children and their families who have previously felt isolated or consumed by their grief.

Our dedicated staff of compassionate and competent professionals has been instrumental in guiding children through their feelings associated with grief. It is through various forms of expressive therapies that our staff has continued to help children navigate complex emotions and challenges connected to their loss.

As we reflect on all that has happened in the last 25 years and look forward to all that is to come, we remain grateful for the legacy that continues to shine brightly as a beacon of hope. Together, with our generous community of supporters we can continue to assure the community that even in the face of unimaginable pain there is a path towards restoration and renewed joy.
Our new Uvalde Center is a warm, welcoming, safe space for children to process their emotions, express their pain, and find solace amid unimaginable loss. We are grateful to support the Uvalde community after the tragedy at Robb Elementary School. We are honored to provide a lifeline for a community that is healing.

Through peer support groups, individual counseling, and various community events, our staff is instilling hope and resilience in the hearts of children and families in Uvalde. We are committed to being a long-term resource for the Uvalde community, empowering children and adults alike to move forward together.
Monarch Society

From its inception, the Children’s Bereavement Center of South Texas Foundation has served a vital role in the overall mission of our organization. The group of donors who have chosen to include us in their estate planning has been so lovingly named, The Monarch Society.

Legacy giving provides a powerful means for individuals to contribute to our organization’s long-term sustainability and growth. These gifts directly support the invaluable services and resources that bring solace, healing, and hope to the numerous grieving children and families we serve year after year.

You have the opportunity to provide a brighter tomorrow to countless children in their darkest moments. Reach out to us today to learn more about how you can help us ensure the mission of the Children’s Bereavement Center of South Texas thrives for generations to come!
Together, we forge a path of hope, compassion, and support, fostering a brighter future for those facing the unimaginable loss of a loved one.
Lauren Ferrero - Chairman
Frances Gonzalez - Vice Chairman
Jimmie Keenan - Secretary
Connie Gilbert - Treasurer
Roberto “Bobby” Rios - Past Chairman

Mallory Ahl
Yonnie Blanchette
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Chris Rulon
Eric Shipp, Ph.D.
Ryan Sullivan
Candace Tottenham
Cecilia Velasquez
Debra Weems

Children’s Bereavement Center of South Texas
205 W Olmos Dr, San Antonio, TX 78212 • (210) 736-4847 (HUGS)

Children’s Bereavement Center of South Texas - UVALDE
319 N. Getty Street, Uvalde, TX 78801 • (830) 333-9833