After the loss of a loved one, some survivors may find the pain associated with their loss doesn't lessen with time. Individual grief counseling and support groups provide a safe place to express feelings, share experiences, learn about grief and move ahead in the process. LifePath Hospice provides various support groups and individual counseling. It is our hope that you will take advantage of the programs that best suit your particular needs and circumstances.

You don't have to be the loved one of a LifePath Hospice patient to participate in these support services. We are pleased to offer our programs to anyone residing in Hillsborough County who has experienced the death of a loved one. Preregistration is required for all offerings. For more information and to register for support groups, please call 813-877-2200 or visit the calendar at www.chaptershealth.org.

**AUGUST 2019**
**LifePath Hospice Bereavement and Support Group Programs**

After the loss of a loved one, some survivors may find the pain associated with their loss doesn't lessen with time. Individual grief counseling and support groups provide a safe place to express feelings, share experiences, learn about grief and move ahead in the process. LifePath Hospice provides various support groups and individual counseling. It is our hope that you will take advantage of the programs that best suit your particular needs and circumstances.

**New Beginnings**
**Adult Grief Support Groups**
Eight-week support groups for adults grieving the loss of a loved one. For more information, visit the calendar at www.chaptershealth.org or call 813-877-2200. We make every effort to accommodate your group preference, but please be aware that the group size is limited.

- **South Tampa**
  Tuesdays, Aug. 6 – Sept. 23, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

- **Plant City**
  Thursdays, Aug. 8 – Sept. 26, 10:30 a.m. – noon

- **Sun City Center**
  Mondays, Aug. 12 – Sept. 30, 1 – 2:30 p.m.

- **Brandon**
  Tuesdays, Aug. 13 – Oct. 1, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

- **Carrollwood**
  Thursdays, Aug. 15 – Oct. 3, 2 – 3:30 p.m.

- **Temple Terrace**
  Thursdays, Aug. 15 – Oct. 3, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

**Circle of Love Center**
Providing support for young grievers ages 3 to 18 and their families.

- **Tampa**
  Second and fourth Tuesdays or Thursdays
  August 13 or 15, 27 or 29
  September 10 or 12, 24 or 26
  6 – 7:30 p.m.

- **Apollo Beach**
  Second and fourth Tuesdays
  August 13 & 27, and September 10 & 24
  6 – 7:30 p.m.

**Ongoing Specialty Bereavement Support Groups**
These specialized support groups can be joined at any time. Please call with questions or to register.

**Young Adult Support Group**
Providing support in a social environment for young adults ages 18-30

**Tampa**
First and third Tuesdays
August 6 & 20 and September 3 & 17
6 – 7:30 p.m.

**Aston Gardens Support Group**
Providing support to Tampa community and residents

**Aston Gardens of Tampa/Westchase**
Second and fourth Mondays
August 12 & 26 and September 9 & 23
10 – 11:30 a.m.

**Advent Hospital Support Group**
Providing support to the Tampa community

**Advent Hospital – Carrollwood**
Second and fourth Tuesdays
August 13 & 27 and September 10 & 24
6:15 – 7:45 p.m.

**Suicide Loss Support Group**
Providing support to those who have lost a loved one to suicide

**South Tampa – Memorial Hospital**
Second and fourth Mondays
August 12 & 26 and September 9 & 23
6 – 7:30 p.m.

**Loss of a Child Support Group**
Providing support for the loss of minor and adult children

**Temple Terrace**
Call 813-877-2200 for details.
How to Help Grieving Children in School Environments
By Corinne Gaertner, MSW, LifePath Hospice Bereavement Specialist

In Florida, August means the return to school for many families, resuming busy schedules and activities and focusing on academic pursuits. For grieving children and adolescents, the emphasis on academics can be daunting.

Following a loss, temporary academic issues are common, and pre-existing learning issues can be magnified. The age of the child can have an effect. Pre-school children often experience regressive behaviors and may be less vocal or appear anxious. Elementary, middle and high school students may have difficulty concentrating and experience decreased attendance and academic performance. Learning and remembering new concepts may be difficult, and children may experience irritability, disruptive behavior or difficulty sleeping. Middle and high school students may also exhibit high-risk behaviors, depression, social withdrawal, guilt or anxiety. Additionally, some students become hyper focused on academics, and adults may miss their pain when they appear to be “doing well.”

Guardians should talk with school personnel prior to the start of school. Teachers, school social workers, guidance counselors and school psychologists may be helpful when issues arise during the school day. To provide support to students during emotional grief bursts, guardians should have a plan to assist their children. It is helpful if teachers know that students may have difficulty concentrating and listening, as it may be necessary for them to provide temporary modifications to academic expectations. All plans should be discussed with students in private. Depending on the loss, it may be helpful to provide delays or extra time for tests and assignments. While modifications can be helpful, removing all expectations is not in the students’ best interests. Routines and structure provide a feeling of safety for children, even if they resist them at times.

Grief is a life-long process. Anniversaries, birthdays and other milestones can prove difficult for students throughout their lives. Developmental milestones can impact grief reactions years after a loss. A student who lost a parent in elementary school may have new issues arise as they enter high school because they now understand and conceive of the loss in a different way.

Judi’s House recently released statistics from its Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model (CBEM) at the National Alliance for Grieving Children Symposium. The CBEM estimates that “one in 15 children in the United States will experience the death of a parent or sibling before they reach the age of 18. This means that 4.8 million U.S. youth are bereaved and the number more than doubles by age 25.” This statistic does not take into consideration the loss of other important family members who may die before children finish high school.

LifePath Hospice provides bereavement services to children and their families through the Circle of Love Center. In addition to regular services, LifePath Hospice offers Camp Circle of Love each spring and support groups for adults and young adults throughout the year. School-based groups are also available through the train-the-trainer Link Program. If your student is in need of services, please contact us, and let the school know we can provide support as well. Feel free to contact the LifePath Hospice Bereavement Department at 813-877-2200 if you have any questions about these programs.