



When you enter The WARM Place, it feels comfortable and cozy. It's a place that invites you to stroll out onto the beautiful porch and sit for a spell. Greetings are offered by huge, soft, fluffy stuffed bears which soften the sting of the quilt that hangs in the entry hallway. Each square on it is a painful reminder that a person's life is no longer. Appropriately, WARM stands for

WHAT ABOUT REMEMBERING ME

Each block on the quilt represents a family that was shattered by cancer, illness, suicide, accident or tragedy. Those families are trying to navigate the road ahead of them and The WARM Place is helping them do just that. Families turn to The WARM Place to find emotional support and help after a death. It also provides grief support services for children and help for their families. Services are offered free of charge to the following age groups: children ages 3½ to 18 and young adults ages 19 to 25, who have experienced the death of a mother, father, sister, brother or other loved one.



The WARM Place

Embracing grieving children right where they are and making a difference in their lives.

THE FOUNDERS | In 1984, Peggy Bohme recognized the need for a group support center for grieving children after the death of her teenage son. Through her search for emotional support for her surviving daughter, she wanted to help other children and their families who were also grieving the loss of loved ones. Dr. John Richardson, a prominent Fort Worth pediatrician, also recognized how important it was to establish a grief support center.

After a death occurs, a parent or guardian may schedule an appointment to talk with a trained counselor about the death loss. The counselor explains the program and how sessions are broken up into age groups and by week day depending on the type of loss they have experienced.

THE PROGRAMS AND AGE GROUPS | On group nights, families gather for a pot-luck dinner and conversation, and then break into small groups by age levels. The groups are broken up by age: 3-4 year olds, 5-8 year olds, preteens 9-12, teenagers 13-18, young adults ages 19-25 and parents/guardians. The rooms are decorated appropriately for each age group with murals painted on the walls.

Depending on the age of the participants, activities such as drawing, modeling clay, painting, journaling, music, games and sharing thoughts or feelings may be a part of the group session. These activities are designed to encourage each person's expression and understanding of grief. Many times the children sit on the floor and talk with each other

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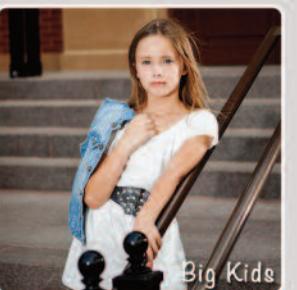
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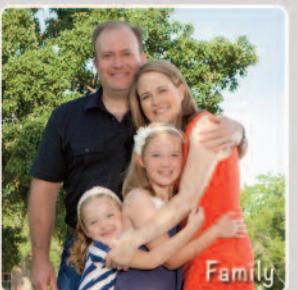
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about the common bond they have
and the feelings they may share.



Each session at The WARM Place is led by volunteer facilitators who have been through extensive training on the grief process and group dynamics. The facilitators help the grieving children and adults express feelings they cannot discuss in most settings. This nurturing environment allows children and their families to process their sorrow.

Each night of the week is designated for a different type of death loss such as parent, sibling, grandparent, friend or other family member. Groups meet every other week on a designated week day from 6:30 until 8:30pm. The number of sessions a family attends is based on each family's individual needs. The average length of participation in the program is 18 months. While children meet in their respective groups, the parents/guardians meet separately and learn how to manage their own grief as well as how to help their children.

It is important to note that The WARM Place offers peer support services. "We offer a 'companionship' approach, because we believe that grief is a normal behavior and reaction to a significant death loss," said Kathy Telger, LPC-S, and Counselor. "As children work through their grief, they share their stories and hear the stories of others with similar losses. This allows them to incorporate the loss, not only in their heads, but also in their hearts because that is where the real healing begins."



THE VOLUNTEERS | The heart of The WARM Place is the dedicated volunteers. "For anyone considering volunteer work here, they should expect to be changed," said Shirley Bowen, Executive Director. "You will learn so much from these children. We know we can't change what happened to them, but we can be present for a child and listen to them and hear their stories. Many times a parent brings a child in who isn't coping well. Grief is very isolating. In a few short weeks that child begins to open up and share with others in the group," she said.

Bowen said that some of her volunteers over the years have been children who were once participants in the program and never forgot how much The WARM Place helped them. "They come back later as adults to serve the children because they have once walked in their shoes," said Bowen. Services are always free and rely on donations from individuals, businesses and private foundations. These donations are vital to ensure that families will never be charged a fee.

CELEBRATING ALMOST 25 YEARS IN SERVICE | More than 24 years have passed since the foundation was formed. The WARM Place is celebrating and kicking off its 25th year in service this fall. It has a staff of ten and serves more than 2,000 children and their families each year. The WARM Place serves as a model for grief support centers throughout the United States and has provided consultation services and professional training in more than 19 states. In its (soon to be) 25 years in service, The WARM Place has helped over 30,000 children.

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