

December 2009 Newsletter Center for Grieving Children

Boys and Girls
Clubs of the Fox
Valley

Volume 4, Issue 11

December, 2009

Peer Support Meeting is set for Tuesday, 12-15-09

6: 00 - 8:15 pm

Program Topic:

Holidays Past and Present

Activity: Making a circlet for a memorial candle
To commemorate our special loved one

Menu: Ham, cheesy rice, vegetable dish, rolls, cider



'Free will offering' concert
To benefit The Center for Grieving Children
Sing a Song of Gladness
Sunday, December 20, 2009, 4pm
Trinity Lutheran Church, 209 S. Allen Street, Appleton
Chaminade Chorus
Master Singers, Junior Appleton Boys Choir,
Bella Musica Chaminade Handbell Choir



Making the Holidays Meaningful

.....Or even just making it through.

Holidays come with lots of expectations; the expectations of children for gifts and magic, expectations of other family members to carry on past traditions, expectations from our culture to be full of 'holiday sparkle'.

Expectations from ourselves to
**MEET ALL OF THESE
EXPECTATIONS.**

Running through all of these expectations is the experience of grief. That in itself require tremendous energy and self compassion. Start now by letting yourself be. Let yourself rest. Let yourself experience the waves of remembering or emotion that might wash over you. You are healing. You are vulnerable. Know from the outset that there will be major limits to what you can do, give, and even take in. Children and teens are in the same boat, perhaps unexpectedly bumping into their own ideas of how Christmas should be, how they would like it to be, how they remember it to be. It can make for some 'grief bursts' that make everyone feel like they just want January to arrive.....continued on next page

Center for Grieving Children

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Volunteer of the Month

Jon Seefeldt has been a volunteer facilitator since 2004, just a few months after the Center for Grieving Children (CGC) opened. After seeing how well Jon worked with his own children, another facilitator at the CGC asked him to become involved. Since then, he has spent a great deal of meaningful time at the CGC, and at Camp Hope, a weekend retreat for grieving children and families. Jon loves seeing progress that the children make and only hopes that he can do



some good during his time volunteering. Jon grew up in Shawano, WI and moved here 19 years ago. Jon now shares his home in Neenah with his two children, his son Sam (11 yrs) and daughter Hannah (15 yrs), and his wife Terry. He also shares his home with a curious chocolate lab named Zoey and a somewhat spicy cat, Cayenne. Jon works for Frito Lay in sales and merchandising, a job that provides him with great hours for spending time with his children. He uses a lot of this time to attend their baseball and softball events, a hobby he claims has given him countless cases of "bleacher butt". In his other free time, he loves to fish and keep his home and landscape looking beautiful. Jon Seefeldt, a man known for his compassion, declares that his experiences have afforded him the ability to distinguish a code to live by: "Say it like it is and do what's got to be done."
Interviewed by Jared Frasier, M3c Lawrence Intern

Holidays -The first step is to take a deep breath and consider what you can do this year. Consider what is essential. Make it a short list, perhaps it is a few gifts or a school program you will attend. Then think about what you are going to cut out, perhaps decorations or greeting cards or holiday baking. If you can't eliminate it completely, make the project smaller. You are balancing expectations for all sides. Take a moment to think about what you can do that would be a gift to yourself: a walk in the snowfall, a book of inspiration, time with a friend, a mug of spice tea, write down some holiday memories from childhood, attend the music concert. Think about your balance of time alone and time with others. Who do you most want around you? There is no right answer. Giving yourself an opportunity to think about what is right for YOU is a good step. This holiday will come and it will go. It will not be exactly like last year, nor the next. year. Some things will be the same and some will be different. Give your self the grace to let yourself BE where you are: emotionally, physically, and financially. Continue to breathe and rest and feel. Do what you can, knowing that you can't do it all. Take time for some simple pleasures. Watch for moments of gratitude. Receive moments of peace. Best wishes as you make it through this season of light at the darkest time of year.....Loris Damerow

More articles on Grief help through the holidays can be found on line at:

www.ehow.com/how_5638830_through-holidays-grieving.html

A simple activity

Set out a dish or jar somewhere in the home. Write favorite memories of holidays past on slips of paper.

Select a time to read them together as a family.

Nicole Stephani, founding volunteer, retires.

Nicole, who is a registered nurse at St Elizabeth's, has been a volunteer facilitator at the Center for Grieving Children since it began in 2004. Her gentle and understanding way with children has been a cornerstone of the program these many years. We honor all of the time and loving energy that she has given to families and to staff. We thank her for her many gifts.

Nicole wrote this message that I would like to share with all.....Loris

Dear Friends:

This was a very difficult decision to make since I have been with the Center since it's inception way back when. I have loved working with the children and their families and there were nights where I think I may have gotten more out of it than some of the kids! I am so proud of the Center and what it does for our community. I am also proud of all of our volunteers and facilitators. It takes a very special person to do what we do. I will continue to recommend your program to the families I work with.

Remind our facilitators to never be afraid to make the kids laugh. Grief is hard work and they need to know that life will go on and that it will not always be sad and lonely. It is OK to cry but it is OK to laugh as well! If group is always dark and depressing we will lose more families than we gain. A good balance goes a long way.

Please say good-bye to everyone including the families and wish them all Happy Holidays for me. When life gets less chaotic I would love to come back. Just not sure when that will be!

Take care and God Bless!

Nicole

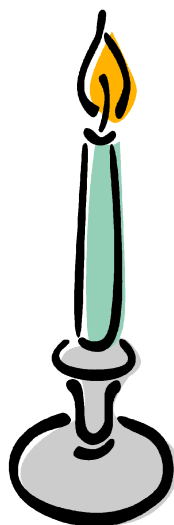


Teen Grief Support Group will start the winter session on
 Thursday, January 7th, at 4:45—6pm
 at Harmony Café' (third floor), 233 College Ave, Appleton
 Group will meet each week for seven weeks, open to any one 13-18
 who has experienced a loss through death. Just come.
 Call CGC if you would like more information.

We Remember.....

Birthdays

Valerie V.	12/16/1965
Gregory J.	12/29/1959
Gillian H.	12/18/1940



Anniversary of the death

Gregory J.	12/29/1959
Michael N.	12/31/2005