



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Storm Clouds Ahead: Summer Activities for Grieving Kids

(Dublin, CA) This summer, a special series for grieving youth will be offered by the Grief Support Center at Hope Hospice. The activities are part of the engaging and supportive bereavement services offered to teens and children to help them learn new coping skills, express their feelings, and tap their creative side in facing the loss of a loved one. Last year, Hope hospice cared for 429 patients and families and provided grief support for 405 adults, 42 children, and 36 parents of bereaved children.

When Carrie in Sunol lost her mom she felt overwhelmed with her grief and found it hard to express her feelings. "I couldn't even talk about it." According to Linda Henry, Family Support Specialist, "Carrie found that the sharing, creative writing, art projects, music and games helped her work through grief and find peace in the company of her peers who had shared similar losses. Children grieve differently than adults do and need special attention during this time."

Each young person finds solace in special activities. The *Memory Box* workshop includes hands-on crafting of boxes in which special mementos and keepsakes from loved ones are stored. Treasures stored there might include Dad's watch, fishing license, or baseball cap. After boxes are completed, participants take turns explaining the meaning of the boxes exterior and the stories connected to the contents inside.

The 'Remembrance Beading' workshop involves a process of remembering a loved one through story telling and the crafting of keepsake wearable art. As a means of providing a tactile approach to tapping into their grief, each participant is invited to take their storytelling to a deeper level by creating a keepsake. Kids carefully choose beads, stones, charms, and special pieces representing the memory of someone they have lost. What starts out as jewelry making becomes a journey into their heart. The outcome is a created piece that tells a very personal story becoming a silent declaration of love and a treasured work of art.

The *Treasure Maps and Boxes* activity involves building a montage of materials resembling an island where challenges and obstacles are added along a person's journey. Going through hard times is like a journey...treasures lost, sometimes buried and new gifts found. Each participant designs their own treasure map representing obstacles to their grief and completes the project by creating their own treasure memory box.

Summer Workshop Series

July 16 2009

Memory Boxes

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - Children 6-12

2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. - Teens 13-18

July 23 2009

Remembrance Beading

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - Children 6-12

2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. - Teens 13-18

Aug 13 2009

Treasure Maps / Obstacles to Grief

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Children 6 – 12

Ongoing Grief Support groups and activities for children and teens will resume in October 2009. Our Grief Support groups and activities for teens and children who have lost a loved one require an intake meeting with parent or guardian prior to participation. Please contact Linda Henry, Family Group Specialist, at (925) 829-8770 to arrange an appointment.

We serve families in Alamo, Blackhawk, Castro Valley, Diablo, Danville, Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton, San Ramon, Sunol and the surrounding communities in the East Bay of San Francisco.

Hope Hospice, a 501 c (3), non-profit organization, is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, licensed by the State of California Department of Health Services, and Medicare/Medical certified. For more information, visit www.hopehospice.com or contact us at (925) 829-8770.