Training Educators to Help Kids Facing Loss

What happens when you combine balloons, crayons, journals and educators? A day of interactive, hands-on training to help children cope with loss. Grief and loss are difficult emotions to recognize and resolve at any age but when children are involved, it can become more complicated.

School age children often face losses in their lives – the death of a parent or grandparent, the sudden loss of a classmate to accident or illness. Grief associated with the loss can manifest itself in many ways, and often school officials are in the best position to identify students in need of assistance and provide resources to help with their grief.

Bluegrass Grief Care created the Grief Tool Kit program to help educators learn how to recognize and respond to children experiencing loss. Offered at no cost to school systems, this program allows school administrators in each participating county to choose counselors, psychologists and teachers to participate in a special day of hands-on grief training led by our bereavement care experts. The program is open to elementary, middle and high school professionals. Each school also receives a developmentally appropriate box of resources to take back for use with their own students affected by grief.

Fayette and Scott Counties were the first school districts to enroll in the program. Last September, the Grief Tool Kit program was rolled out to educators from Bourbon, Harrison and Nicholas Counties (pictured here at the training). The response to the program has been tremendous, and participating professionals report feeling better prepared to help children dealing with a wide range of loss.

The Grief Tool Kit program is 100% funded through charitable donations. The next phase of the Grief Tool Kit program will be offered to Franklin, Woodford, Owen and Anderson County schools in the fall of 2019, thanks to the generous underwriting support of Harrod Brothers Funeral Home.

To learn more about the Grief Tool Kit program, or to make a donation, please call 855.492.0812.
Help Staff Reach Our Communities

Most people prefer to spend their last months at home, near family and friends, rather than in a hospital. At Bluegrass Hospice Care, we work hard to make this possible. Eighty percent of our patients choose to remain in their homes because we bring hospice care to them, no matter the distance.

In 2018, our hospice staff drove more than 2.5 million miles throughout a 10,132 square mile service area spanning 32 counties. This required over $1 million in transportation costs to send doctors, nurses, social workers, aides and chaplains to hospice patients in their homes.

This spring, please consider making a gift to “Making Tracks: Fuel the Hospice Spirit,” a fundraising campaign created by former Bluegrass Care Navigators volunteer Catherine Smith, to help us cover transportation costs in each of our Kentucky communities. Your gift will stay in your community to help local families receive care at home!

Please make your gift today at give.bgcarenav.org/makingtracks2019

MAKING TRACKS: FUEL THE HOSPICE SPIRIT™ and its associated design are trademarks of 5PercentandBeyond.org, LLC and used with permission. All rights reserved to 5PercentandBeyond.org, LLC. Just Enjoy.

Volunteer Spotlight: Alyson Bergman

Like most college seniors, Alyson Bergman is focused on her future. Studying sociology and psychology at Transylvania University, she knew she wanted to explore a career in social work but was not clear in what direction this might take her. She met with her school’s Community Engagement Center staff and mentioned that she enjoyed working with older adults, so they directed her to an opportunity to volunteer with Bluegrass Care Navigators.

Alyson began volunteering at BCN in January 2018, initially as a companion to hospice patients. She began sitting with one gentleman specifically, visiting him weekly for several months. Alyson said that they spent their time together just talking – he enjoyed telling her stories, and she enjoyed listening to him. “Volunteering here and seeing the light in patients’ eyes when I talk to them, bringing a little joy and happiness into their day, is so rewarding!” shares Alyson. She says this is what inspires her to ask for more and more volunteer assignments. Today, Alyson volunteers weekly at BCN. She continues to work directly with the patients, but she also assists in the administrative offices and with many special projects.

Over the past year, Alyson’s work as a Bluegrass Care Navigator volunteer has impacted the lives of many patients and families. It also has helped her realize her own future goals. “Working with the hospice patients has confirmed that my passion is assisting older adults,” she explains. “I have volunteered at other social service organizations, but BCN is the first place where I witnessed care being given to meet all of the patient’s own needs as well as the needs of their family members. I am so thankful I could be a part of BCN and experience how this organization helps so many people in our community.”

To learn more about becoming a volunteer or to complete an application, please visit: bgcarenav.org/more-about-us/volunteer

Bluegrass Care Wish List

Our volunteer program is always looking for the following in-kind donations to use with our patients:

• Blank note cards
• Thinking of You notes
• Gift bags and tissue paper (for patient birthday programs)
• Lap blankets and afghans
• Knitted hats
• Quilts
• Fidget blankets (small lap quilt or blanket that provides sensory and tactile stimulation for the restless or fidgety hands)
Bundle Up with Bourbon & Blues

It might have been cold outside that January night, but inside Limestone Hall nearly 300 guests were bundled up for a great time in support of a wonderful cause. There was something to warm everyone’s heart at the 4th annual Bundle Up for Bourbon & Blues event including bourbon tastings from Four Roses and New Riff, delicious food in a beautiful setting and dancing to the fabulous Jordan English Band. The highlight of the evening was the Mystery Box auction, where participants chose from hundreds of wrapped gift boxes each filled with a fabulous surprise of unknown value. One lucky winner took home a large screen television!

Many thanks to all of our corporate sponsors and everyone who attended or supported the 2019 Bundle Up with Bourbon & Blues fundraising event. Your generosity helps Bluegrass Care Navigators continue to offer compassionate, expert care to seriously ill patients and their families in Central Kentucky.

A New Face in Philanthropy: Laura Klumb

In January, Bluegrass Care Navigators welcomed Laura Klumb as its new Vice President of Philanthropy. Laura joins the team after spending the past 8 ½ years as the Executive Director for the Kentucky Horse Park Foundation. Previously, she managed individual giving, corporate & foundation relations, and special event fundraising at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center as its Assistant Vice President for Development.

When asked what attracted her to the mission of Bluegrass Care Navigators, Laura explains, “At Cincinnati Children’s, I worked closely with clinicians and patient families involved with StarShine Hospice & Palliative Care. I was profoundly moved by the stories the families shared and the care I witnessed. Hospice is very personal to me – my own family has been blessed by tremendous hospice and bereavement support. I cannot think of a more impactful mission than guiding and providing care to patients and families throughout Kentucky who are coping with serious illness.”

A Lexington native, Laura is a graduate of Transylvania University and the Washington University School of Law. She began her career as an attorney in St. Louis before transitioning to the nonprofit sector. While with Cincinnati Children’s, Laura called Fort Thomas, Kentucky home. Welcome, Laura, to the Bluegrass Care Navigators family!
DID YOU KNOW?

The Sara Kaufmann Society was established to recognize those thoughtful individuals who have included Bluegrass Care Navigators in their estate plans or have made a life-income gift to the organization. It allows BCN to thank those special donors during their lifetime and to recognize their commitment in a meaningful way.

Becoming a member of the Sara Kaufmann Society is easy – all you need to do is inform us that you have included Bluegrass Care Navigators in your will or estate plans. Sharing your intention enables us to respect your wishes regarding your gift designation as well as your preferences related to recognition of your gift. You do not need to disclose the amount of your intended gift if you do not wish to do so.

To learn more about the Sara Kaufmann Society or making a planned gift to Bluegrass Care Navigators, please contact Laura Klumb, Vice President of Philanthropy, at 855.492.0812.