

## What We Provide...

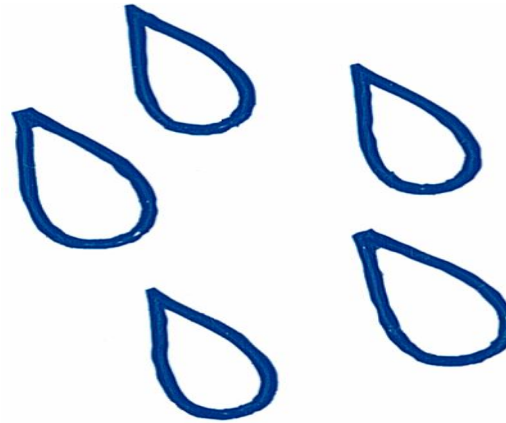
BitterSweet Place offers age-appropriate, on-going support groups that provide:

- ◇ A creative and educational environment that inspires individual healing through peer support and group interaction.
- ◇ Activity based lessons utilizing writing, art, music, and discussion.
- ◇ Trained volunteers and staff to provide consistent understanding and encouragement.

BitterSweet Place welcomes all grieving children and their families regardless of race/origin, religion, or sexual orientation.

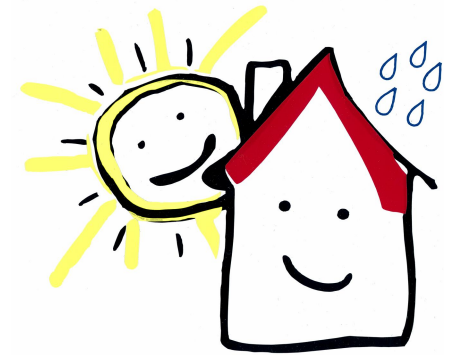
## We Believe...

- ◇ Grief is a normal and healthy reaction to loss.
- ◇ Within each individual is the natural capacity to heal.
- ◇ Caring and acceptance assist in the healing process.
- ◇ The duration and intensity of grief are unique for each individual.
- ◇ A sense of community contributes to healing.



## BitterSweet Place

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## BitterSweet Place

A center for grieving  
children & their families

[www.BitterSweetPlace.org](http://www.BitterSweetPlace.org)

## Why We Are...

Bittersweet Place was developed specifically to address the grief of bereaved children

*"The most instinctive place bereaved children and teens turn when in crisis is to their peers who have experienced similar losses."* Alan Welfelt, PhD

### Healing the Bereaved Child

According to national statistics, 20% of our children will experience the death of a parent, sibling, or significant family member by the time they graduate from high school. When death in the family occurs, the bereft parent is too focused on his/her own grief to aid the stricken child. It is a common misperception that children are resilient and will quickly recover. They are not and they do not. Instead, they become the forgotten mourners. These children are prone to develop emotional, social, behavior, or academic problems.



## How We Do It...

At Bittersweet Place, children and teenagers (ages 3-18) get to be with other children their own age who are going through similar sorrowful experiences. Here they are free to grieve in their own way. Through their sharing, children may grieve at their own pace in a loving environment that's overflowing with support.

Parents and care givers meet in a volunteer facilitated support group where they share their feelings and receive ideas for helping their children. The center provides a safe and understanding environment for all grieving children and their families.

## When We Do It...

Children and teens meet with others their age two Tuesdays of every month. Each group is facilitated by trained volunteers. The children's groups begin and end with a brief talking circle. Because play is the language of children, the center provides opportunities for each child to express feelings through artwork, puppetry, music, and physical activity. This provides children with a means to explore their grief and express feelings that they might not be able to say out loud.

## Goals...

- ◇ To provide volunteers trained in grief counseling and support processes to assist children and families explore their perceptions and perspectives about death.
- ◇ To help them understand the many psychological, physical, spiritual responses typically experienced in the grief process; make necessary adaptations and develop coping, communicating, and healing strategies for the individual and the family
- ◇ To provide a safe and understanding environment where grieving children and their families can obtain support from trained volunteer facilitators and other families in similar situations.

