



# Grief-Sensitive Schools

*Bereavement resources to support grieving students*



Grief-Sensitive  
Schools Initiative

# Our approach:

## Grief-Sensitive Schools Initiative



## **Our Connection:**

### **Childhood Bereavement and New York Life**

- Aligned with New York Life's mission.
- To date, we have committed over \$60 million to support and help advance the field of childhood bereavement.
- As a part of this effort, we identified and addressed key gaps in the bereavement field in need of attention – including grief support at school.
- Partnered with top 10 educational organizations to create the Coalition to Support Grieving Students.
- Launched the Grief-Sensitive Schools Initiative to support school communities with grief support resources.



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## Our request\* to schools:

### **Agree to partner with New York Life on the New York Life Grief-Sensitive Schools Initiative (GSSI)**

- Agree to strive to be a Grief-Sensitive School
- Promote and encourage all school staff\* to attend the GSSI presentation
- Participate in communication strategy around partnership
- Feedback and follow-up as needed

### **Strive to become a Grief-Sensitive School by increasing awareness of this issue and resources:**

- Sharing information with school community about [grievingstudents.org](http://grievingstudents.org)
- Reviewing relevant school policies and practices
- Providing specific professional learning opportunities
- Posting the “Grief-Sensitive School” decal in your building
- Utilizing the \$500 grant to support school community in their efforts

*\*after the GSSI presentation*



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## **Our partnership with the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement**

- Partner for over a decade
- Lead founding member of the Coalition to Support Grieving Students
- Addresses “grief support in schools” through the New York Life Grief-Sensitive Schools Initiative
- Located at the Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles



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# Resources



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# Key Resources

## **Coalition to Support Grieving Students**

**[www.grievingstudents.org](http://www.grievingstudents.org)**

- Guidance Documents: Grief Over The Holidays
- Teaching training modules: How School Staff can Initiate Conversation and Offer Support
- Additional articles: Coping With the Death of a Student or Staff Member
- Parent resources: Handout: Supporting Your Child

## **New York Life Foundation – Bereavement Support**

**[www.achildgrief.com](http://www.achildgrief.com)**

- State-by-state bereavement resource listing: bereavement centers, camps and support groups
- Free printed materials: After a Loved One Dies & Supporting Our Students

## **National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement**

**[www.schoolcrisiscenter.org/](http://www.schoolcrisiscenter.org/)**

- COVID-19 pandemic resources: Supporting Grieving Students During a Pandemic – A guide to using the Coalition to Support Grieving Students materials
- Guides: Communicating with the Family
- Sample notifications and templates: Guidelines for Schools Responding to a Death by Suicide

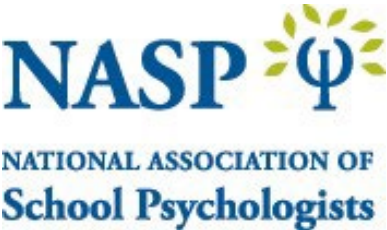
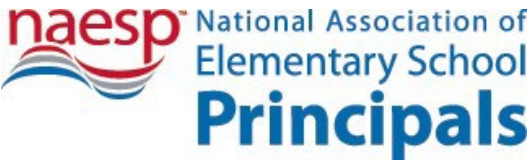


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# Coalition to Support Grieving Students

*Founding Members*



NATIONAL CENTER  
FOR SCHOOL CRISIS  
AND BEREAVEMENT



NEW YORK LIFE  
FOUNDATION



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# \$500 Grant

*The \$500 Grief-Sensitive Schools Initiative grant from the New York Life Foundation is to support your school's goal to strive to become a Grief-Sensitive School.*

## To receive this grant, schools must\*:

- Be an accredited K-12 public, private or charter school
- Have at least 5 school personnel from the school register for and attend the GSSI presentation from a New York Life GSSI Ambassador
- Agree to strive to be a Grief-Sensitive School based on the criteria listed above
- Complete a brief grant form

## Suggestions for fund use:

- Host a “lunch and learn” about [www.grievingstudents.org](http://www.grievingstudents.org)
- Update relevant school policies and resources
- Bereavement “lending” library
- Purchase resources to support grief in schools
- Create a supportive place for grieving students
- Special programming for students, school personnel and/or parents to discuss ‘grief in schools’

*\*Schools can only receive one grant through this program, no grants will be made in subsequent years to the same school*



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## The State of Grief Report: COVID-19's Impact on Bereavement Support in America

DECEMBER 2021



## New York Life Grief-Sensitive Schools Initiative

*School toolkit*

Thank you for joining over 3,000 schools in  
becoming a **Grief-Sensitive School**.

Welcome to the Grief-Sensitive Schools (GSSI) network. The Grief-Sensitive Schools Initiative (GSSI) is part of New York Life's nationwide effort to better equip educators and other school personnel to care for the grieving students. Through the program, trained New York Life ambassadors connect with schools in their local communities to offer a brief 20-minute presentation on the grief in schools and the dedicated resources available. School that receive this presentation and agree to strive to become Grief-Sensitive, may receive a small grant to support their efforts.

The GSSI program was developed to:

- raise awareness of the prevalence of children's bereavement;
- introduce the Coalition's industry-endorsed bereavement online resource and other bereavement resources;
- incentivize local schools/districts to raise awareness of both this issue and this resource in their school community; and



# Printed and Digital Resources

## Booklets

- After a Loved One Dies: How Children Grieve and How Parents and Other Adults Can Support Them
- Supporting Your Child Brochure
- Supporting Our Students Brochure

## Other resources

- What to Say/Not to Say Tip Card
- Kai's Journey and Discussion Guide
- First Book Discussion Guide

Order from <https://bereavement.newyorklifestore.com/>

\*Most materials are available in Spanish

All New York Life bereavement materials listed are free of charge, and there is no fee for shipping.

**Bereavement Resources**

One in 14\* American children will lose by death a parent or sibling before the age of 18, and a majority of young people will experience a significant loss by the time they complete high school.

Recognizing this critical need to provide greater support for bereaved children and their families, the New York Life Foundation has made childhood bereavement a key philanthropy focus for over a decade.

[LEARN MORE](#)

\*Results from the Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model (CBEM) developed by Judi's House/JAG Institute [www.judishouse.org/CBEM](http://www.judishouse.org/CBEM)



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# Kai's Journey: the book series

Grief isn't just one moment in time, it's a journey.

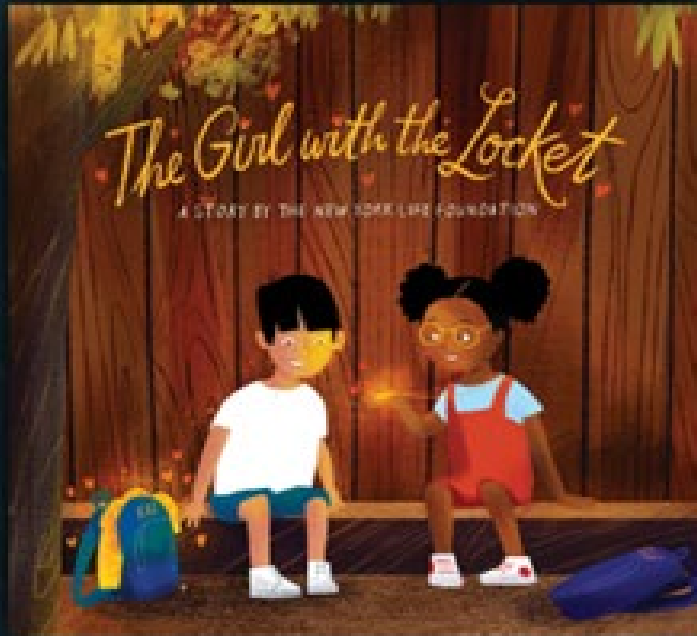
In this series, we follow young Kai as he learns to cope with his ongoing loss. He'll discover different coping mechanisms to help him through his grief.

## BOOK - 1



*In Golden Sweater, Kai grieves the loss of a parent and finds strength through a golden memento and his loving mother.*

## BOOK - 2



*In The Girl With the Locket, Kai learns the power of connecting with a new friend who has a similar experience.*

## BOOK - 3



*In The Fishless Lake, Kai discovers that traditions are a valuable tool to keep the memory of his dad close.*



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# Local Partners



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Free support groups for bereaved  
children, teens and adults



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CHILDREN'S GRIEF CENTER OF NEW MEXICO

505-323-0478  
CHILDRENSGRIEF.ORG

# How we help

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Facilitated  
peer support  
groups

all ages  
and stages



Bereavement  
Facilitators



Camp  
Corazon

Rural  
community  
support



Free  
Specialty  
workshops



Losing Library

Resources  
available to  
the public



Statewide  
Training

# GRIEVING CHILDREN, GRIEVING FAMILIES WEBINAR – THIS SATURDAY 2/26 10AM VIA ZOOM

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Practical information for anyone in family, in community, or in professional relationship to grieving children.

Parenting Through Grief provides a framework for how to navigate parenting in the shadow of loss. With simple strategies to help you connect with your family during this difficult and painful time, [Parenting Through Grief](#) provides the comfort of knowing you can still parent with confidence and love.

Grieving Children, Grieving Families webinar attendees will receive a free copy of [Parenting Through Grief](#).

Go to [www.childrensgrief.org/events](http://www.childrensgrief.org/events) to register



Call 505-323-0478 or email  
[info@childrensgrief.org](mailto:info@childrensgrief.org) to connect

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"Every part of  
our lives are  
strengthened.  
We went from  
a feeling of  
hopelessness  
to a feeling of  
empowerment  
and strength."

~ Father whose son died



"When someone  
dies you come here  
and it helps."

~ 6 yr. old whose Dad died



"Well, I felt empty, lost & confused.  
I cried every night but the Grief  
Center helped me."

~ 13 yr. old whose father died of an overdose





# Gerard's House


...for grieving children

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3204 Mercantile Court Suite C  
Santa Fe, NM 87507  
Telephone: 505.424.1800 voice

Email: [info@gerardshouse.org](mailto:info@gerardshouse.org)  
<https://gerardshouse.org/>





Gerard's House is your Santa Fe center for grieving kids and families. When a child or teenager experiences the death of a parent or other loved one, we are there with free grief support services and we have been since 1997.

Gerard's House is here for everyone in our community who is grieving. Because so many families experience barriers when they need grief support, we energetically focus on reaching the city's most vulnerable grieving youth—kids who have immigrated from war-torn and impoverished regions, kids coping with homelessness and kids who have attempted suicide.

Services include 18 weekly peer grief support groups, a mobile unit, suicide-prevention programs, individual sessions, a summer camp, crisis response services and support for parents/caregivers, all free of charge and bilingual for youth ages 3 – 21 who have experienced life-changing loss, such as the death of a parent or other loved one. We also provide 7 weekly grief support groups for adults in English and Spanish, all free of charge.



## **Grief Support Services include:**

**Nuestra Jornada (Our Journey) \*** + weekly immigrant support groups for Latino immigrant students in Santa Fe schools who are grieving the death of—or separation from—a parent or family member.

**Grief Connections** + weekly peer bereavement support groups at Gerard's House and in Santa Fe schools for children and youth who have experienced the death of a parent or other loved one. Concurrent support is also provided at Gerard's House for parents and adult family members.

**Adult Grief Support Group** + offered year-round for all adults grieving the death of a loved one.

**Stepping Stones \*** + mobile grief support unit goes to the homes of children, teens and families who are coping with a life-threatening illness.

**Crisis Response services \*** + responds when a youth suicide or other death affects students.

**Suicide-prevention \*** + Addressing youth attempted suicide and those who have contemplated suicide, this weekly peer support group is a collaboration between Gerard's House, Semicolon group and the Sky Center/New Mexico Suicide Intervention Project.

**Grief support groups for homeless youth \*** provided on-site at two Youth Shelters and Family Services locations for those experiencing youth homelessness, including young adults experiencing homelessness.

**The Young Parents/Teen Mom Nuestra Jornada Group** + Programs to help Latino pregnant teens and Latino teen parents, as well as their children. Gerard's House meets their basic needs and helps young parents connect with each other, share their stories and receive nurturing, support and important resources.

\* Mobile, + bilingual

# Thank you.



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