

Is grief support for everyone?

Bereavement and grief support are available free of charge to Bristol Hospice families and to the community at large. But what is grief support and how do you know if you or a loved one needs it?

Bristol Hospice Care Bereavement Coordinators James Farrell and Chaplain Robert Richardson answer these questions for us.

Who needs support?

“Loss is a traumatic event. Our bodies respond in hectic and traumatic ways,” said Chaplain Robert.

“We need to recalibrate after a loss. If we have a car accident, we often need to decompress, to catch our breath, to recalibrate before we are ready to drive again. Grief support can help you take that breath after a loss and regain physical, spiritual and emotional balance.”

James said, “We go to the gym to improve our body. We go to the doctor

when we are not feeling well. We take our cars in for oil changes. But many don’t think to take these actions for our mental health. We can have a big hit emotionally, but we don’t take steps to utilize the tools available.”

Everyone’s reaction to loss is different and their journey through it is unique.

Grief has no timetable; emotions and responses may come and go. So how do we recognize grief and the need for support?

“Your mind thinking one thing and your body behaving in another way is a sign of grief,” said Chaplain Robert.

“For example, our mind tells us that we are fine and we have control. However, our bodies are not reflecting that; we may experience

a lack of sleep, a high level of stress, accelerated heart rate, crying for no reason, or even thinking about our own mortality differently than before. Grief support can help us to recalibrate, to get mind and body on the same page and regain a healthy balance.”

James said, “Drastic changes in personality such as an introvert becoming extra-extroverted or vice versa could be concerning. But it doesn’t have to be a crisis to benefit.”

“It is all right to have emotions. It is also ok to not have emotions. They can come organically over time. Especially for children, realization of the event may be delayed. There is no right



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TIPS ON DEALING WITH GRIEVING CHILDREN



CHILDREN

Have the right to experience their own unique grief

Need to know that they will be cared for

Need to know what feelings to expect and that they are normal: anger, sadness, fear, guilt

Need someone who will answer their questions

Need to maintain normal routines

ADULTS

Need to use direct, clear language when explaining the death: do not use euphemisms

Need to remain consistent in discipline to maintain the safe boundaries that kids need

Need to allow children to express their grief through play, art and behavior

Need to know that grieving reactions are often spontaneous

Can model their grief for the children by not hiding emotions or ways of expressing grief

Grief support, continued from page 1

or wrong way to grieve,” said Chaplain Robert.

What does support look like?

“Each person’s grief and needs look different. Support is not a one-program-fits-all situation,” said James.

Bristol Hospice offers support in family, small group and one-on-one settings.

“These are laid back, comfortable get-togethers. There isn’t an agenda. It is a time to share your story, thoughts and emotions. We meet you where you are in your grief journey and provide tools to help you do the work of mourning and processing grief,” said James.

“I had a young family who lost their mom,” said James. “Their youngest, a daughter, was seven years old at the time of the loss. Mom received her cancer diagnosis following that daughter’s birth. The daughter had been carrying the guilt that she made mom sick, that it was her fault. Through bereavement support, she came to learn to that there was no way possible she made mommy get cancer.”

“Adults typically know someone who has experienced a loss and they have a healthy frame of reference and know how to turn to others,” said Chaplain Robert.

“Often children don’t know anyone their own age who have gone through a similar event. Think about how important it is to have grief support for the kids.”

In addition to support groups, grief support tools may include written resources and connections to others, such as a counseling referral to a therapist or psychologist. Another valuable resource is Bristol Hospice Foundation Kids Camps.

Kids Camp provides children an opportunity to connect with others who are grieving, learn coping skills and enjoy traditional camping activities, in an atmosphere where both staff and campers understand their special needs.

One-day camps for younger kids have shorter activities that help them identify emotions and feelings, learn how to express their feelings and to identify who they have to talk to – their support system.

“The three-day camps are less about grief-specific activities. Camp starts with a discussion and understanding that everyone here has experienced a loss. The support happens organically with the campers. They learn that it’s ok to be a kid and have fun,” said James.

“Children need to know that they are not alone and they are not oddballs for feeling what they are feeling. Support from peers is very important. It doesn’t even have to be a conversation. A laugh, a look, hugs, or even just playing a game with someone you know has been through a similar event can make all the difference. There is a sense of normalcy, a license to know that it is all right to have a good day.”

Getting support

If you or a loved one would like more information on grief support resources, please visit bristolhospice.com or contact your local Bristol office.

Kids Camp information and referral forms are available online at bristolhospicefoundationca.org/kids-camp.

REFER A CHILD FOR CAMP

Kids Camp is provided free of charge and is open to any child in the community even if their loved one didn’t utilize hospice services.

To refer a child, contact your local Foundation office or visit bristolhospicefoundationca.org/kids-camp to complete a referral form.

8th Annual NORCAL Camp

Hosted by The Taylor Family Foundation

Ages 9 to 16

Friday, August 11 – Sunday, August 13
at Camp Arroyo in Livermore

18th Annual Fresno Camps

Ages 6 to 9

Saturday, July 8 (one day) at Railroad Park in Clovis

Ages 9 to 16

Friday, July 14 – Sunday, July 16
at Camp Oakhurst, Coarsegold

29th Annual Bakersfield Camps

Ages 6 to 9

Saturday, July 22 (one day) at Madison Grove Park

Ages 9 to 12

Sunday, July 23 – Tuesday, July 25
at Gergen Ski Ranch

Ages 12 to 16

Wednesday, July 26 – Friday, July 28
at Gergen Ski Ranch

BECOME A HERO

SPONSOR A CHILD FOR KIDS CAMP

Sponsorships allow us to provide this amazing opportunity for young people who have experienced the death of a loved one at NO COST to the family.

If you would like sponsorship information or if you know a company or individual who would like to change the life of a child contact Cherie Shoemake at (661) 716-8000 or via email at cherie.shoemake@bristolhospice.com.





Kids Camp is both a place to express grief and, surprisingly, to forget about it as well.

Camp activities and amenities vary by location.



31ST ANNUAL

GOLF IN THE SUN & UNDER THE STARS TOURNAMENT

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

Stockdale Country Club | Bakersfield

- Play 9 Holes in the Sun
- Play 9 Holes Under the Stars with Glow Balls
- Enjoy Dinner & Prize Drawings
- \$150 Entry Fee



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To register a team at bristolhospicefoundationca.org
For sponsorship opportunities, call (661) 716-8000.

Event date/details subject to change. Updates will be posted on our website and Facebook page.
Sponsorship & Registration Forms available at bristolhospicefoundationca.org

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SAVE THE DATE



Saturday, October 28

Bakersfield
KOA Journey
Crest Bar and Grill

Open to ALL Vehicles Including
Motorcycles

For event sponsorship,
entry and vendor information,
call the Foundation office
at (661) 716-8000, email
cherie.shoemake@bristolhospice.com
or visit bristolhospicefoundationca.org.

Event date/details subject to change.
Updates will be posted on our website
and Facebook page.

100% of net proceeds
benefit Bristol Hospice
Foundation of California

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Bristol Cares

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GARDEN WINE TASTING

JOIN US for an evening of Spirits,
Hors d'oeuvres, Prize Drawings & Entertainment

SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2023
AT 5:30 PM

Hosted at the home of Tim & Millie Byers
Van Ness Avenue, Fresno

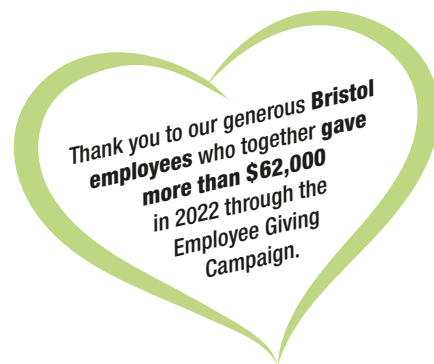
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of Fresno

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General Admission Tickets: \$50

Information, Tickets and
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www.bristolhospicefoundationca.org



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From our Bristol Hospice employees to our events sponsors, our corporate and individual donors, and everyone in between, your generosity and continued support has assisted us in continuing to fulfill our Mission to support patients, families and members of our communities. We are greatly appreciative of your support.

DONATIONS ONLINE?

Yes! Use our secure donation platform on our website's donate page to donate today.



Scan the code above or go to the website below to visit our donate page

bristolhospicefoundationca.org/donate

The Foundation would like to say

THANK YOU

to our sponsors, donors, attendees,
staff and volunteers who support our
Light Up A Life events



Light Up A Life

2022 COMMUNITY CELEBRATION HOSTS

BAKERSFIELD KOA JOURNEY/CREST GRILL • CAMPUS POINTE SHOPPING CENTER
• CAFÉ 210 • KERNVILLE CIRCLE PARK • WOOD FAMILY FUNERAL HOME

FOUNDATION LOCATIONS

FOUNDATION OFFICE

1227 Chester Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301
(661) 716-8000

COMMUNITY OFFICES

Bakersfield

(661) 716-8000

East Bay – Pleasanton

(510) 438-1600

Fresno

(559) 320-8000

Greater Los Angeles – Lakewood

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Bristol Hospice Foundation of CA ensures hospice care and programs are available for all patients and families facing a life-limiting illness. Programs include hospice care funding and Kids Camp for children who have experienced the death of a loved one.

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