

# Center for Grieving Children

## March and April 2019

CGC offers peer support for youth, ages 3-18, and their families who are grieving a death.



### March

		TUESDAY	
		<b>12</b>	
		<b>26</b>	

### Family Night

We have an active TEEN group,  
a busy MIDDLES group,  
a group for 8 -10 year olds, one for 6 and 7 year olds  
and LITTLES, 3 to 5 too.  
Also groups for the adults who accompany these kids and youth.

We begin with therapy dogs to greet you before sitting down to a warm meal with your family and our CGC volunteers here at the Boys & Girls Club.

Next, join your small group, designed for your age, or adults, with activities and discussion about your loss. Finally, gym time, then closing circle.

		TUESDAY	
		<b>9</b>	
		<b>23</b>	

### April

For new participants...  
The only requirement to attend is an orientation session with the Director.

ldamerow@bgclubfoxvalley.org  
920-750-5839



If you are grieving do you ever wonder...

"Will I ever be happy again?", Will I ever get through this?"

A huge change has occurred in your life. Everyone in your family is making adaptations. There will be a wide range of emotions cycling in and out. There is so much 'grief work' to be done in that first year after a death. Then there comes the second year, and the third and the fourth. It is impossible to say, what part or what time is the hardest, but your experience of the loss does change over time, even with all of the ups and downs.

It is most important to give yourself time to adapt to change. As you move through your grief, here are 3 simple ideas to consider that may give you a boost. These are taken from, *The 100 Simple Secrets of Happy People: What Scientists Have Learned and How You Can Use It*, by David Niven.

Secret #75: Listen to Music. Hakanen, 1995, found that a positive effect on mood was found for 92% of individuals when they listened to music of their choice.

Secret #50: Cherish animals. Barofsky and Rowan, 1998, found that "those with a loved pet are 22% more likely to feel satisfied than those without."

Secret #36: Laugh. "Happiness was found to be related to humor. Those who enjoy silly humor are one-third more likely to feel happy." Even fake laughter releases endorphins and creates mood improvements that soon leads to real laughter.

CGC - Loris Damerow, Director - 920-750-5839  
Boys & Girls Clubs Fox Valley - 160 S. Badger Ave Appleton  
ldamerow@bgclubfoxvalley.org - www.cgcfv.org



## SLEEP SLEEP SLEEP

It's common for people to experience a change in their sleeping pattern in the days, weeks and months following the death of a loved one. This can be true for kids as well as adults. Grievors may have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep. You may be waking up to bad dreams or have intrusive worries that just won't stop. You may be concerned about managing all the changes that come with a loved ones death, in addition to the emotions of grief. For some, the lack of sleep is so big that it's impossible to ignore its impact, but for many, the loss of sleep seems small when you're dealing with more obvious and painful stressors. It is easy to overlook the impact fatigue might have on your emotional outlook. A good night's sleep really can make you feeling better, emotionally and physically.

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. This will help you fall asleep quickly and wake up better. Not doing this is like being jet-lagged all the time.
- Make your bedroom a relaxing place. Remove clutter, make your bed comfortable, and try not to use your room to read, study or play. If that's not possible, at least keep a part of your room separate for sleeping. Activities like studying, gaming or watching TV on your bed will make it hard for your mind to calm down when it is time to sleep.
- Eat a light snack. A big meal disrupts sleep but a small snack like a glass of milk, a banana, or cereal with milk will help you sleep
- Exercise can help with sleep disturbances. A brief workout can help your body find its way back into equilibrium. A walk or hike will expose you to natural light, which will contribute to a healthy sleep cycle.
- Journaling for grief allows you to externalize your thoughts and stories. It can be a way to give yourself permission to discontinue the thoughts. Try journaling at least 30 minutes before bed, and imagine you can put everything down on paper that you are holding in your mind.
- The National Sleep Foundation points out that even though alcohol can act as a sleep aid shortly after consumed, it disrupts the second half of sleep once your body begins to metabolize the alcohol. Caffeine, of course, is the antidote to sleep. Try increasing your water intake during the day, but avoid it an hour before bed.
- Therapeutic bodywork, such as massage, reiki, acupuncture or Yoga can help your body relax and bring your system back into balance.
- Calm activities an hour before bed like listening to quiet music or reading a book. It will help your mind and body relax before it is time to sleep.
- Try a relaxation exercise before bed such as stretching or progressive muscle relaxation.
- Turn off electronic devices 1 hour before bed. Avoid using the computer or watching TV one hour prior to going to sleep. Make sure your room is dark.

Heather Stang blog

<https://mindfulnessandgrief.com/grief-sleep/>



In May, we will be providing more tips for helping younger children to manage bedtime.