

inside

fernside

A publication for grieving children and their families

Be a Volunteer!

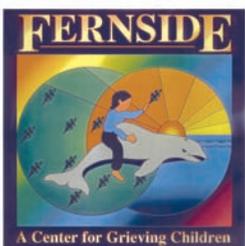
Opportunities include:

- Support Group Facilitators
- Support Group Greeters
- Office Assistance
- Research Support
- Fundraising/Special Events Assistance

Contact Mary at (513) 745-0111 if you'd like more information about our volunteer program.



**Fernside
Volunteers**



An Affiliate of Hospice
of Cincinnati, Inc.



A Volunteer's Story

When I tell people I volunteer at Fernside, a Center for Grieving Children, the typical reaction is "How can you do that? It must be so sad. I couldn't handle that!"

So why do I do it?

My mother died when I was 22, my father when I was 37 and my first husband when I was 49. During my husband's illness I sought out a counselor. I talked. I felt comfortable with her. I could say anything that was on my mind without feeling guilty, selfish, emotional, weak – any negative emotion you might name. After my husband's death I attended a grief support group at a local church. I still remember arriving at the parking lot and hesitating to walk in because I didn't want to talk about being a "widow." But I did go in and I did talk and I listened. I was encouraged by the people who had been going through the grieving experience longer than I. I felt great hope.

We at Fernside encourage the children and adults to talk. It might be through guided imagery, play acting, art, peer interviews, games or pretend funerals. The way the participants communicate is not important – it is that they feel comfortable coming to Fernside. They are with people who are also feeling pain. They discover they are not alone. If they choose not to talk, they listen. I worked with 4-5th grade children for two years and I'm in my third year with the preteens. We know that most preteens find sharing difficult. My co-facilitator Barb Henry and I have some pretty neat ways to get the preteens to share!

We had one boy who was with us for over a year. Initially he was quite despondent and did not participate. A faithful aunt brought him every week and the progress was amazing. He slowly began to share his feelings and was quite helpful in talking with new youth about his progress since the death. He kept fond memories of his mother in his heart but he grew to understand that life goes on and that pain lessens with time.

Is it sad? Yes. Is it difficult? Sometimes. Why do I continue? Because I know that these young children who walk through the Fernside door week after week need loving, understanding people who are "there for them." They need each other. Sit just one evening in the wrap-up session and hear the stories, the concerns and the victories to know that we are needed and that the youth are responding. The foundation of the volunteers is the dedicated staff at Fernside who fill the gaps and keep the whole program working.

Cam Baker is a Monday Parent Loss facilitator for grades 6-8

"Rachel Burrell was a wise woman to have seen the need for a place like Fernside."

– Cam Baker

Fernside Volunteer

Program News

New Families Join Evening Support Groups

From October through December, 104 children and teens and 73 adults joined our evening support group program. We welcome all 177 new group participants to our program.



East End Heritage School Group

School Groups

Our school group program continues to expand. Already this school year we have provided grief support to over 70 children in peer support groups that are held at the following schools:

- Berry Intermediate (*Lebanon City Schools*)
- Bond Hill Elementary (*Cincinnati Public Schools*)
- Carson Elementary (*Cincinnati Public Schools*)
- Colerain High School (*Northwest Local School District*)
- Columbia Elementary (*Kings Local Schools*)
- East End Heritage (*Cincinnati Public Schools*)
- Kings Junior High (*Kings Local Schools*)
- Mason Intermediate School (*Mason City School District*)
- Monroe Elementary (*Monroe Local School District*)
- New Richmond Elementary (*New Richmond Exempted Village School District*)
- North College Hill High School (*Southwest School District*)
- Princeton Junior High (*Princeton City Schools*)
- Roger Bacon High School
- Winton Forest Elementary (*Winton Woods City School District*)
- Winton Woods Middle School (*Winton Woods City School District*)

Orientation Sessions

Families interested in joining the support groups must attend an orientation. Orientations are held in Blue Ash on the third Monday of each month. Completed paperwork must be returned prior to attending an orientation. Please call the office for registration information.

2006 Camp WeBelong

Sailing the Seas: A Voyage Through Grief, Fernside's summer camp for children ages 7 – 11, will be held August 10th – August 13th. For registration information, please contact the office.

A Twist on Twister

Two Fernside facilitators recently came up with a great new group



Thursday Extended Loss Group

activity. Cindy Stiens and Laura Baum facilitate 10,11 and 12 year olds on our Extended Loss night. This is the night when kids who have experienced the death of an extended family member (grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin or friend) attend support groups. Cindy and Laura decided to adapt the popular Twister game for use in their group. After a death in our family we experience many changes, both in our lives and within ourselves. Cindy and Laura came up with questions that addressed changes and as each group member took their turn spinning, they had to answer the question as well as twist their body on the game mat. Some of the questions were Can change be good? If you could change something about a loved one, what would it be? What does change mean to you?

When asked, "What would you change about yourself?" one group member responded, "I wish I was nicer to my family." Thanks to the creativity of volunteers like Cindy and Laura, kids at Fernside can learn to talk about a death and the changes it brings while having fun too.

Support Groups Available

Blue Ash:

- 2nd and 4th Monday Parent Loss
- 2nd and 4th Tuesday Parent Loss
- 1st and 3rd Tuesday Sibling Loss
- 1st and 3rd Thursday Extended Family Member and Friend Loss
- 1st and 3rd Thursday Young Adult Support Group

Hamilton Area:

- 1st and 3rd Tuesday Parent Loss

Bridgetown

- 2nd and 4th Wednesday Parent Loss

Anderson Township

- 2nd and 4th Thursday Parent Loss

Volunteer News

The week of April 16th marks the annual National Volunteer Week celebration. Volunteers are recognized for all the time and effort they contribute to countless programs across the country. As Fernside marks its 20th anniversary this year, we acknowledge and honor the hundreds of volunteers who have been an integral part of our service to the community. Thank you!

The Hospice Summertime Classic is scheduled for June 4th and 5th at the Hyde Park Golf and Country Club.

This annual event supports programming at Fernside. Volunteers are needed for both days. Please contact Erin Walker at the Bethesda Foundation if you would like to help. She can be reached at (513) 745-1613 or at Erin_Walker@trihealth.com.

Fernside's summer camp program, Camp WeBelong, takes place this August. Planning for the camp is underway now. Facilitators should contact Mary if they are interested in volunteering as camp counselors.

wish list

- Crayola Model Magic
- Foam shapes and letters
- Gift cards to Hobby Lobby, Michaels' and Ritz
- Gift certificates to Oriental Trading Company, Inc.
- I-Tunes gift cards
- Memory boxes (small/medium, paper mache)
- Polaroid 600 film

Call with any questions or to arrange a pick-up time: (513) 745-0111. Ask for Christi! Thanks!



The Write Side

This space is devoted to the writings, drawings and quotes of Fernside children and adults who are grieving the death of someone close.

Lighting candles in memory of our moms and dads



Tuesday Parent Loss night, 1st-3rd graders

**To Contact Us at
Fernside:**

4380 Malsbary Road, Suite 300
Cincinnati, Ohio 45242
phone: (513) 745-0111
fax: (513) 745-0524
www.fernside.org

Chris Barnett
Interim Director
chris_barnett@trihealth.com

Katie Hausfeld
Group Coordinator
katherine_boehner@trihealth.com

Christi Kettman
Outreach Coordinator
christine_kettman@trihealth.com

Lynn Kitchen
Group Coordinator
lynn_kitchen@trihealth.com

Mary McCutchen, MSW
Volunteer Coordinator
mary_mccutchen@trihealth.com

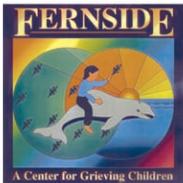
Vicky Ott, MA LPCC
Program Coordinator
victoria_ott@trihealth.com

Join Us for Opening Day Parade

What do Fernside and the Cincinnati Reds have in common? The 87th annual Findlay Market Opening Day Parade! This marks the 20th year that Fernside has been offering grief support services to children and families in the Greater Cincinnati area. In recognition and celebration of all of the individuals, organizations and donors who have made this possible, we will be creating a float to thank the community for all of their support and to continue to heighten awareness of children's grief issues. Please come out and cheer us on!



photos courtesy Reds Hall of Fame Museum



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FERNside:
A CENTER FOR GRIEVING CHILDREN
4380 Malsbary Road, Suite 300
Cincinnati, OH 45242
(513) 745-0111

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We are very glad to get corrections.

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