

Creating & Sustaining Community Report | 2023

“The best part of Fernside was when you asked how we felt, and I knew you guys were listening.”



“Fernside means a good feeling. I know I’m not the only one whose had a death. I can get all my sadness out.”



“Fernside has been a wonderful guiding light for me and my kids for the past year.”



FERNSIDE

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND
FAMILIES THROUGH GRIEF

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the children and families we serve, thank you for your support of Fernside this past year. On the following pages, we are proud to share another exciting year with you.

2023 was significant because it was our first full-year return to in-person services for all our programs. And our families responded by attending meetings 44% more often than during our virtual programming years. We served 1,391 children, teens and adults in our support group programs, just shy of our pre-pandemic record of 1,414 in 2018-19! An additional 809 community members benefited from our crisis support and educational outreach programs.

We had a stellar fundraising year, capped by our largest gift ever from bi3. The \$1.3 million grant award will allow us to grow our team, increasing our capacity to reach more students onsite at area schools. The grant also creates an endowment for Fernside ensuring our **sustainability**. We appreciate this amazing investment in Fernside's future.

Traditionally when we talk about **creativity** at Fernside its related to programing, like our new Summer Day Camp, but this past year we also put our **creative** skills to work internally by upgrading our processes and leveraging technology, allowing us to work smarter and making it easier for families and schools to register for our programs.

As we look ahead to 2024, we will be working with a newly **created** Fernside Advisory Committee and will be tapping into these inaugural member's talents, skills, and connections to make us even better.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without the unwavering support of so many in our community including our amazing volunteers and all of you - our loyal and generous donors. Thank you for **sustaining** the grieving families in our community.

With gratitude,

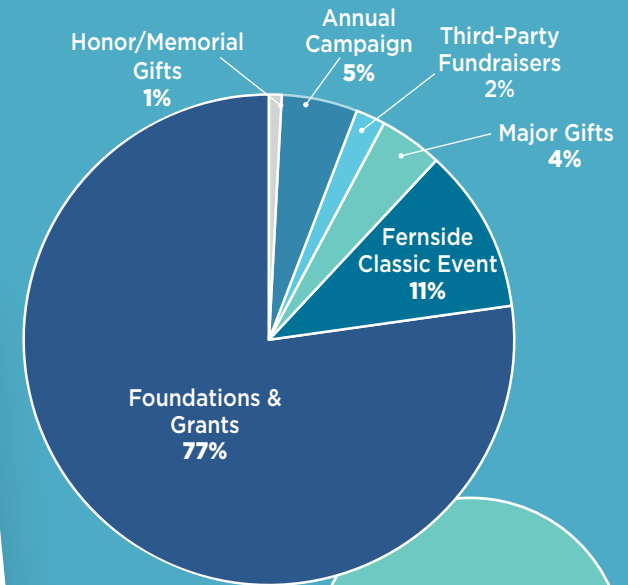
Vicky Ott, MA, LPCC-S

Executive Director, Fernside

Numbers Served by Program



Circles of Support



In-Kind Donations
\$32,625

Volunteers
\$180,242*

*estimated value of 5,668 donated hours

“Being able to open up without the typical ‘Oh, I’m so sorry’ is like a breath of fresh air.”

Expanding Capacity in Schools

bi3 Grant Award: \$1,300,000

bi3, a grants initiative to transform health and strategic partner of TriHealth, awarded \$1.3 million to the Fernside Center for Grieving Children to expand capacity and youth mental wellness services into area schools.

“bi3 is committed to youth mental wellness and providing the resources to every family who needs it. We look forward to collaborating with Fernside to ensure all families and children in Greater Cincinnati have a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.” —Jill Miller, President & CEO of bi3



Groups Held in Schools in OH, KY & IN

90

“The Fernside group helped me a lot with focusing in class.”

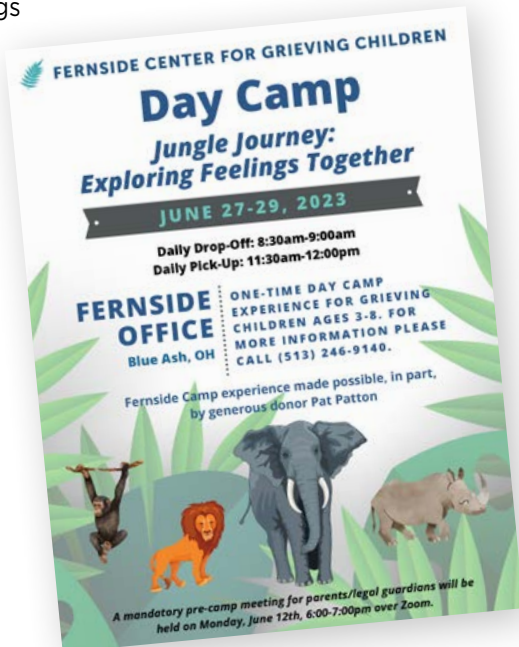
Wild About Camp

New Day Camp

Fernside created a new Day Camp designed especially for kids 3-8, with a theme of Jungle Journey: Exploring Feelings Together. Day Camp, Summer Camp and Teen Retreat offerings provided camp experiences for more kids—and a wider age range—than ever before.

Number of Fernside Campers in FY23

74

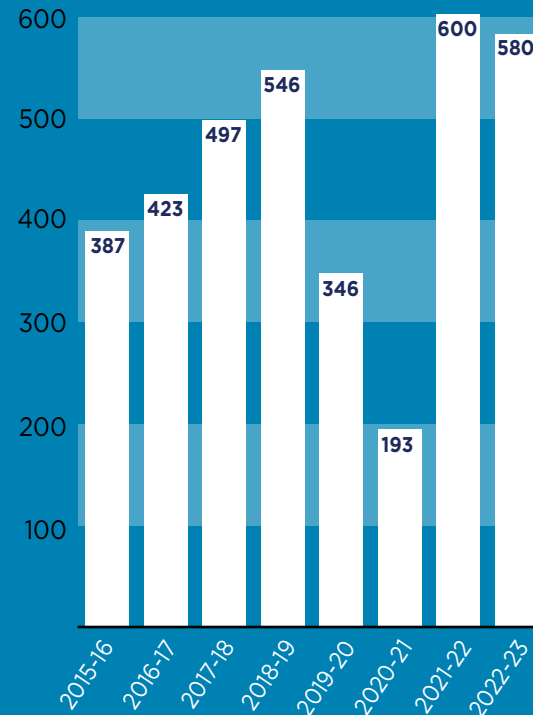


“Fernside is the happiest place I ever came to in my life.”

— Day Camper

Number of Students Served

School-Based Programs



Points of Contact:

2,778

Top positive behavior changes in students who participated, as reported by counselors:

- Less worrying—68%
- Interacting more positively with peers—55%
- More confident—50%

Why Fernside?

Fernside's free programs make a lasting impact for grieving children and families.



“Fernside is...Everything.
Community, connection, support.
It has been truly amazing and
we're forever grateful.”

In their own words:

Family: “I got to experience Fernside this year as both the school counselor and as a mother of a child who participated in Fernside. I always loved Fernside, but now seeing the difference it has made in my own child's life, I am beyond words for how much I appreciate the work that you do. After experiencing the death of a family member, my child became very anxious and refused to sleep alone. She participated in both the school and evening Fernside programs. She started sleeping on her own again and her anxiety improved. Thank you so much for all that you do!”

Donor: “Fernside helped us carve out ways to find love, hope and joy in our grief. And because of this, we continue to find ways to fundraise for them, so they can show up to guide and support other children and their families in grief.”

Volunteer: “The entire Fernside team did an amazing job creating a warm, welcoming and educational environment! Training itself was comprehensive, thorough, and well organized. I already feel like part of the Fernside Family and am prepared to contribute to the mission and cause. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to give back and look forward to volunteering.”

Counselor: “Thanks for all you do for our students. Some of the students were having difficulty talking about their grief. After the group, many students were starting to open up to family and teachers about their loss. Helping the students have an outlet for the feelings has been a definite positive outcome of the group. Thanks for coming to our school!”

Turn your **WHY** into **HOW** you can help.

We are able to **keep Fernside's programs free to all** because of the generosity of our donors, and the support of our volunteers.

How can you help? Please consider making a tax deductible gift to Fernside to help us continue to help all grieving children and families. Volunteer opportunities are available, as well. Contact us to learn more about ways you can keep Fernside's vital services available to our community—visit www.fernside.org.

Fernside is a 501(C)(3) organization supporting programs for children and families who have experienced a death. All donations are 100% tax deductible under U.S. law.