

Friends of Caroline Student Bereavement Support Groups

The Student Bereavement Team of Friends of Caroline is a group of volunteers trained to help students cope with the death of a loved one.

Support Group Goals

- Provide a safe, non-judgmental environment for students to express their feelings and accept their grief;
- Help students recognize their individual support system and realize they are not alone;
- Assist students discover acceptable coping strategies;
- Guide students to voice their exaggerated feelings through art, writing, and discussion;
- Help students create a lasting memory of the person who died.

What is the Cost of a Support Group?

Bereavement Support Groups are **FREE**.

The groups are provided by Friends of Caroline at no cost to the students, their families, or the school.

Quote from
a 5th Grade Student

“Now I am able to go up and give my mom a big hug when she cries.”

How Do I Get My Student into a Support Group?

Let your student’s school teacher, counselor, or social worker know that he or she has suffered a loss. This is vital to helping the student begin coping with the loss in a positive, successful manner.

The school counselor or social worker will contact FRIENDS to enlist a volunteer to facilitate a Support Group and will send home information and a permission form. Sign and return the permission form to the school. Students can only participate with permission from the parent or legal guardian.

Support groups involve 2 - 6 bereaved students working together in 6 Support Group sessions. The sessions are conducted at the school during school hours once each week.

Dear Friends of Caroline,

I wanted to take a moment to...thank you for the wonderful but also important work you do with the children who are grieving. I (teach) two of the students you are currently working with.

When I first met the (students), they were expecting that their mother would be passing away shortly. (One) was quiet and sometimes angry. (The other) greeted me the first day of school with this statement, “You know my mom is going to die.”

Their mother did pass away. They missed very little time at school and didn’t really speak about her. Now that they have been participating in your grief groups, I see different children.

I can’t tell you at what moment things started changing for them, but I can tell you that these children come back to class happy and ready to be with their peers and their teachers. By giving them an environment where they feel safe to share their feelings and thoughts, I believe you have made it possible for them to move forward happily. They remember their mother fondly, but it is more of happiness than a burden.

Thank you for taking your time to show these children the love they deserve and talk about the love they have lost.



Sincerely,
An Elementary School Teacher

A Grieving Student’s Bill of Rights

1. I have the right to have my own unique feelings about the death.
2. I have the right to talk about my grief whenever I feel like talking.
3. I have the right to show my feelings of grief in my own way.
4. I have the right to need other people to help me with my grief.
5. I have the right to try to figure out *why* the person I loved died.
6. I have the right to think and talk about my memories of the person who died.

