



Tennessee Conference on Children's Grief

We invite you to join Alive's Grief Center for a one-day conference for local clinicians and community members who want to enhance their skills and learn about the latest research and clinical developments in working with grieving children and teens. Learn from experts in the field, and enjoy a free lunch along with fun opportunities to learn about Unscripted Improv.

Mental health providers can receive six (6) Continuing Education hours for this event.

Tennessee Conference on Children's Grief has been approved by NBCC for NBCC credit. Alive is solely responsible for all aspects of the program. NBCC Approval No. SP-4379.

Register today!



When: Thursday, November 9 | 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: The Honey Alexander Center at Family and Children's Services
2400 Clifton Ave, Nashville, TN 37209

Parking: Additional parking at Mt. Nebo church, located next door

Cost: \$75 (Includes Lunch from Apple Spice)

To register, scan code or visit: AliveHospice.org/Conference
Registration closes November 2.

Overall Learning Objectives

1. Compare current models for the conceptualization of grief in children.
2. Differentiate typical vs. traumatic, complex grief response and identify strategies of support applicable for both circumstances.
3. Recognize evidence-based approaches to working with bereaved youth from a developmental perspective.
4. Demonstrate six unique expressive arts activities appropriate for use in the clinical setting.

Event Speakers

- Kate Atwood, *Founder, Kate's Club: Reframing Grief for Children*
- Alissa Drescher, *Sr. Director of Mission Based Services, Alive: Engaging Grieving Children and Adolescents through Expressive Arts*
- Patti van Eys, PhD, *Van Eys Mental Health, LLC: The Complexity and Reality of Grief and Loss in Young Grievers*
- Mara Giovanni, MSW, *Kali Connection Therapy: The Use and Benefit of a Somatic Approach for Grieving Youth*
- AnneMarie Sears, LMFT, BSN: *Lessons from Covenant and Beyond: Supporting Children, Teens, and Families After a Community Tragedy*

Learn about our event speakers:

AliveHospice.org/Conference

Questions? If you need special accommodations or have questions, please contact us.

Laura Gay Clark, *Alive's Mission Based Services*
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Alive's Mission: We provide loving care to people with life-threatening illnesses, support to their families, and service to the community in a spirit of enriching lives. *Alive is a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit. Alive is a trademark of Alive Hospice, Inc., and is registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office.*

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Learning Objectives and Session Overviews

Session 1: Reframing Grief for Children

Presented by: Kate Atwood

Kate will share her personal journey, reflecting on the profound loss of her mother when she was just 12 years old. This pivotal moment in her life became the catalyst for founding Kate's Club. This conversation will delve into the philosophy, strategies, and programs that benefit the lives of young people navigating the path of grief today, and address the importance of a community-wide effort to support grieving youth.

1. Describe the individual and collective impact of unaddressed grief in childhood.
2. Examine how children understand death and respond to loss from a developmental perspective.
3. Illustrate the benefits of community programming for grieving children.
4. Recognize the importance of addressing your own grief and balance your needs as you set out to serve others.

Session 2: The Complexity and Reality of Grief and Loss in Young Grievers

Presented by: Patti van Eys

This session will focus on the often complex reality of grief for young people. Social, relational, and cultural factors may create disenfranchisement in the grief experience creating a multi-layered circumstance wrought with multiple losses and trauma. How best then can clinicians support young grievers who present for counseling? This session will explore the signs of complicated grief, and offer counseling strategies from a trauma-informed perspective.

1. Differentiate complicated grief, including prolonged bereavement, from uncomplicated grief in young grievers.
2. Explain the intersectionality between trauma and grief.
3. Summarize common reactions to loss across development.
4. List foundational therapeutic approaches to help children, teens, and families navigate grief journeys.

Session 3: Engaging Grieving Children and Adolescents through Expressive Arts

Presented by: Alissa Drescher

Often it can be difficult to engage young grievers through discussion, as they have yet to develop a language around loss and death concepts. Yet, meaning-making and open communication about the loss are known to be preventative measures to thwart prolonged grief. Therefore, clinicians need to be equipped to connect with a young client's grief through other means. This presentation will focus on the benefits of using Expressive Arts techniques to externalize the loss experience, and help children and adolescents feel comfortable confronting loss-related concerns. Six developmentally appropriate expressive arts activities will be demonstrated in a hands-on experiential format that is consistent with the Continuing Bonds theory of bereavement.

1. Explain the benefits of expressive arts as an approach to connect with grieving youth.
2. Demonstrate six unique expressive arts activities appropriate for use in the clinical setting.
3. Recognize the role of Meaning Making in childhood bereavement.
4. Discuss Continuing Bonds Theory and its use with bereaved children and adolescents.

Session 4: The Use and Benefit of a Somatic Approach for Grieving Youth

Presented by: Mara Giovanni

The purpose of this session is to familiarize participants with the core concepts of Polyvagal Theory, and apply these concepts to working with grieving youth. In addition, the KALI Connection therapeutic approach will be actively demonstrated so that attendees are introduced to a practical somatic technique that may benefit their bereaved clients.

1. Analyze the foundational concepts of the Polyvagal Theory, including the crucial aspect of Neuroception, to gain insights into their application for supporting grieving youth effectively.
2. Develop the ability to identify, differentiate, and understand various nervous system states in grieving youth, enhancing the capacity to provide tailored support.
3. Emphasize the vital role of bottom-up regulation in promoting emotional healing and resilience in children and adolescents experiencing grief.
4. Actively demonstrate and teach a practical somatic technique that can be applied to provide effective support and intervention for grieving youth, equipping participants with an actionable skill.

Session 5: Lessons from Covenant and Beyond: Supporting Children, Teens, and Families After a Community Tragedy

Presented by: AnneMarie Sears

Mental health professionals are commonly called upon in the wake of a community tragedy to provide crisis counseling and community support. Therefore, it is imperative that clinicians are aware of evidence-based tools and frameworks applicable to such situations so as not to retraumatize participants. This session will provide an overview of multiple tools that are suitable for use after a mass loss event and equip clinicians with resources and skills to help foster both individual and community healing after a tragic event.

1. Explain the CISD tool and areas of opportunity for future use as a vital tool for responding to trauma and promoting psychological resilience in individuals and groups.
2. Evaluate fundamental survival needs, referred to as Survival Bricks, and their impact on individuals following trauma.
3. Utilize the Circles of Intimacy, Priorities, and Impact for clients to establish healthy boundaries and clarify personal priorities, promoting self-care and balanced lifestyles.
4. Discuss how to recognize and address suppressed emotions and the degree and intensity of their or the client's Pool of Pain.

