INTRODUCTION

• **2.5** million children in the United States, under **18**, have experienced the death of a parent
• **1** of every **20** children under the age of **15** will lose one or both parents to death
• **36,000** children experience death of a parent in California
• Disruption can lead to emotional, social, behavioral and academic disturbances
• Losses produce lifelong challenges

GOALS OF A HEART CONNECTION

The purpose of this proposed grant is to request funding for short-term therapeutic support services and closed groups for children from the age range of 5 to 25 years old and the surviving parents/caregivers through the program, **A HEART CONNECTION**.

The overarching goals for this dual approach program are:

1. to increase children’s effective coping skills and practices,
2. to increase children’s positive adaptation to the loss through therapeutic grief work,
3. to increase parent/caregiver’s effective coping skills and practices and
4. to increase parent/caregiver’s knowledge on supporting children through grief
SOCIAL WORK RELEVANCE

The National Association of Social Workers (2004) stated:

All social workers, regardless of practice setting, will inevitably work with clients facing acute or long-term situations involving life-limiting illness, dying, death, grief and bereavement. Using their expertise in working with (varying) populations...social workers...must be prepared to assess needs and intervene appropriately. (p. 7)
MULTICULTURAL RELEVANCE

• Death and grief are topics that impact all humans regardless of cultural backgrounds

• Clinicians should examine the cultural expectations and beliefs regarding death and be thoughtful and sensitive in service delivery

• Children do not typically have the option to refuse services; therefore, maintain an understanding and awareness of cultural variations
METHODS

TARGET POPULATION

• A minimum of 250 individuals annually
• All ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures and religious beliefs
• Parents/caregivers and children ages 5-25 years

SEARCHES FOR A FUNDING SOURCE

• California State University's Library
• Long Beach Non-profit Resource Center
• National Alliance for Grieving Children

SELECTED FUNDING SOURCE

The Foundation for Grieving Children, Inc. was selected as a funder for this grant as it is a national public charity explicitly intended to increase funds for the assistance of children, teens, young adults and their families following the death of a loved one.
METHODS CONT.

SOURCES USED FOR THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

• Academic Journals
• Comfort Zone Camp (host agency)
  • 75.18% of participants reported that they learned about what grief is
  • 68.61% reported that they learned coping skills

PROJECTED BUDGET RANGE & CATEGORIES

• A Heart Connection will require $220,522 from the Foundation for Grieving Children, Inc.
• Allocated for
  • Staff salaries and benefits
  • Operating expenses such as project and office supplies, equipment, communication tools, training and some travel

THE TORRANCE CZC OFFICE WILL COVER RENT, UTILITIES AND A PRINT LEASE IN THE AMOUNT OF $20,400
GRANT PROPOSAL

PROGRAM SUMMARY
• One-year grant - (4 groups per cycle – 8 cycles annually)
• Three age-specific groups for children & one group for parents/caregivers
• Follows Dr. William Worden’s Tasks of Mourning

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES
• Family assessment & admission
• Coping skills pre-test
• Group participation
• Evaluation distribution
• Follow up assessment
GRANT PROPOSAL CONT.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

(1) *Increase effective coping skills* and practices by utilizing multiple play therapy techniques

(2) Children will *increase a positive adaptation* to the loss through participation in art therapy activities

(3) Surviving parents/caregivers will *increase effective coping skills* and practices by applying cognitive behavioral therapy practices

(4) Surviving parents/caregivers will have an *increased knowledge* of how to support children through grief through psychoeducation regarding the grief process with children

PROGRAM EVALUATION

- Qualitative Journal Assessments
- Qualitative Summary Assessment for children
- Coping Skills Inventory
- Qualitative Summary Assessment for parents/caregivers
LESSONS LEARNED

• **Grant Writing Process**: There is little research on child and adolescent grief

• **Selection of Host Agency**: Utilize relationships and connections established. *Relationships matter!*

• **Identifying Funding Sources**: *Communicate* with those in the field

• **Selecting a Funding Source**: Ensure the vision, perception and goals *align*

• **Program Design**: Worden’s Tasks of Mourning and Klass’s concept of Continuing Bonds – everyone’s grief journey is *unique*

• **Professional Development**: How to write a grant, what funding sources are available and *requirements* of budgeting for a program
REFERENCES


