



February 26, 2016 –, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT),
7201 Corporate Center Road, Hanover, MD 21076

*Department of Human Resources’
Office of Licensing and Monitoring
Agenda*

Welcome

Darlene Ham

Contracts

Tennille Thomas

Dealing with Grieving Youth
In Out of Home Placement

Dorenza Thomas
Roberta House

COMAR Review Panel

Lisa Beeman, Gary Lee & Kim Clark

IRC

Sheila Phillips & Paula Stokes-Kearney

Questions and Answers

Next Quarterly Provider Meeting:

Thursday, May 26, 2016 from 10am to 12pm

@ MDOT



Growing Through Loss

Understanding Grieving Youth in Out of Home Placements



Roberta's House History

- ▶ Roberta's House was founded in June of 2007 in memory of the late Julia Roberta March, by her children. Julia Roberta March, was the matriarch and co-founder of the March Funeral Homes in Baltimore, Maryland. She and her husband, William C. March, were successful business owners that began in 1957 and was well known for their compassion and giving spirit. Thousands of families were served out of their small row- house funeral home because of their commitment to providing dignified, affordable services to low income families.



Vision Statement

Families who experience loss are able to transform their despair to hope, become healthy and ultimately create safer communities.

Roberta's House 10/16/15



Mission Statement

We believe all children and families suffering the loss or death of a loved one should have support and a safe place to heal and recover. Roberta's House addresses grief as a public health preventive service.

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Roberta's House Motto

I CARE FOR YOU
YOU CARE FOR ME
WE CARE FOR EACH OTHER

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Facts Regarding Grieving Children and Youth

- ▶ Programmatically we, are sometimes unaware of the precursor which leads to undesirable behavior(s) on the milieu or foster homes .
- ▶ In a study conducted in 2012 by New York Life Foundation and American Federation of Teachers, classroom teachers report that students who have lost a parent or guardian typically exhibit:
 - ▶ Difficulty concentrating in class (observed by 87%)
 - ▶ Withdrawal/disengagement and less class participation (observed by 82%)
 - ▶ Absenteeism (observed by 72%)
 - ▶ Decrease in quality of work (observed by 68%)
 - ▶ Less reliability in turning in assignments (observed by 66%)
 - ▶ 7 in 10 teachers (69%) currently have at least one student in their class(es) who has lost a parent , guardian, sibling, or close friend in the past year

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Providing Support for Children and Youth



- ▶ Loss is a natural and expected part of life. Before reaching adulthood, the majority of children and adolescents will experience the loss of a close or special person .
- ▶ Therefore, it is very important for foster parents and staff at all levels have strong understanding of ways in which they can support grieving children and youth.
- ▶ This includes having an understanding of expected grief reactions as well as the ability to identify reactions or behaviors that are indicative of unhealthy mourning.

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What Are Typical Grief Reactions?



- ▶ **Preschool Level** - Young children are generally unable to directly express their emotions, Adults should be alert to the following symptoms: decreased verbalization, Increased anxiety, and regressive behaviors
- ▶ **Elementary School**- Although more able to express feelings with words, school-age children more readily communicate grief responses through changes in behavior including the following: difficulty concentrating or inattention, somatic complaints, sleep disturbances, withdrawal, increased irritability, disruptive behavior, depression guilt , decreased in academic performance and poor attendance
- ▶ **Middle and High School**- Teenagers exhibit symptoms more like those of adults, with less experience and less developed coping skills. Their symptoms might include: flashbacks, emotional numbing or depression, nightmares, avoidance or withdrawal, peer relationship problems , substance abuse or high-risk behavior and a decreased in academic performance or school attendance

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How Can Schools Support Bereaved Students ?



- ▶ Many of the the reactions shared may have negative consequences on milieu behaviors and academic achievement .
- ▶ Program personnel can help to support youth during these difficult times.
- ▶ After a loss youth will likely need some support to help them cope with their feelings as well as to adjust back into their routine.

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Levels of Support



- ▶ Fortunately , programs have many levels of support available to children who have experienced loss:
- ▶ Level 1. Naturally occurring support systems such as Child and Youth Care Practioners, foster parents, social workers, program administrators, peers and community members help students deal with grief.
- ▶ Level 2. Support at this level contains psychoeducational interventions and potentially therapeutic interventions.
- ▶ Level 3. Support at this level is higher therapeutic and provided for severely grief- impaired youth

Preparing To Assist When Needed



- ▶ As Grief and loss are natural and expected part of life, agencies must expect that a percentage of their clients will be affected by the death of a loved one each year. Facilities can take several steps to ensure they are prepared to assist children and youth who experience a loss.

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Preparing to Assist When Needed



- ▶ Provide basic information about grief and loss
- ▶ Provide information about cultural sensitivity
- ▶ Prepare staff to answer questions
- ▶ Teach staff to watch out for signs of intense
- ▶ Inform staff that certain behaviors are expected

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Signs That Additional Help is Needed



- ▶ Personnel should be particularly alert to any of the following as indicators that trained mental health staff should be consulted for intervention and possible referrals:
- ▶ Severe loss of interest in daily activities (e.g. play and friends)
- ▶ Disruption in ability to eat or sleep
- ▶ Fear of being alone
- ▶ Repeated wish to join the deceased
- ▶ Severe drop in school achievement

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Roberta's House School Base Program



- ▶ "Growing Through Grief" which is a 10 week program designed for children and teens.
- ▶ This program is appropriate for children/ teens dealing not just with the death of love one (s), but other significant loss such as : incarceration , deployment,
- ▶ divorce or separation of a parent or guardian.
- ▶ Dealing with the loss of love one (s) leaves a significant void in the hearts of many, especially children and teenagers.

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Recommended Resources



- ▶ Auman, M. (2007). Bereavement support for children. *Journal of School Nursing*, 23(1), 34-39.
- ▶ Black, S. (2005). When children grieve. *American School Board Journal*, 192(8), 28-30. Brock, S. E., Nickerson, A. B., Reeves, M. A., Jimerson, S.
- ▶ R., Lieberman, R. A., & Feinberg, T. A. (2009). School crisis prevention and intervention: The PREPaRE model. Brock, S. E., Nickerson, A. B., Reeves, M. A., Jimerson, S.
- ▶ R., Lieberman, R. A., & Feinberg, T. A. (2009). School crisis prevention and intervention: The PREPaRE model. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.
- ▶ Brock, S. E., Lazarus, P. J., & Jimerson, S. R. (Eds.). (2002). *Best practices in school crisis prevention and intervention*. Bethesda, MD: National Association of

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Outcomes



- ▶ Youth are able to describe grief as normal and healthy
- ▶ Connect with other youth
- ▶ Express feelings and explore lessons learned
- ▶ Differentiate between positive and negative coping behaviors associated with grief
- ▶ Able to make meaning out of life's experiences
- ▶ Create a positive purpose for life
- ▶ Support other who experience loss

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Do You Have Any
QUESTIONS ?????

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