



## When Tragedy Strikes

When a local school counselor learned that one of her kindergarten students had been killed on Christmas Eve, she quickly called **GriefWorks**. She had seen firsthand the support we provide, as our staff had facilitated a Kid Talk group on her campus in the fall. So she invited **GriefWorks** to return to support staff and students.

Before students arrived their first day after the holiday break, two of our staff members met with teachers and other school personnel, supporting them, answering questions, and equipping them with specific tools to help meet their students needs. Then we spent time with the shocked and grieving classmates. Our staff provided activities and opportunities for the children to talk about their feelings, to find healing through memorial activities, and to express care for the surviving relatives.

Thank you for your generous contributions, which enable **GriefWorks** staff to be on hand after tragic and sudden deaths, administering emotional first aid and helping mend broken hearts.

**WINTER INSTITUTE:** **GriefWorks** is pleased to partner with The National Center for Death Education to offer professional workshops featuring internationally renowned experts. Topics this year include: *Cultural Sensitivity: Working Effectively within a Multicultural Community*, *Caring for Grieving Children*, and *Addressing Community Bereavement Needs: Who Provides What, How, and Why?*

Continuing education credits will be available. **For more information or to receive a brochure with the workshop details, please e-mail us at [info@griefworks.org](mailto:info@griefworks.org).**

## Breakfast News

Our 4th Annual Benefit Breakfast, was held December 13, 2007 and it was wonderful to see members of the community coming together to support **GriefWorks** mission. After a welcome from **GriefWorks** Board of Directors member Craig Hudson, Auburn Mayor Pete Lewis honored us by leading the flag salute, followed by an invocation by Chaplain Fred McHugh (Auburn Regional Medical Center,) inspiring words from co-founder Mel Erickson, and Chaplain Michael Hursh (South County Outreach) spoke about our new Compassion Partners program. Thank you to all our Table Hosts and attendees—we could not have done it without you!



**GriefWorks**

PO Box 912, Auburn, WA 98071-0912

[www.griefworks.org](http://www.griefworks.org)

## Announcing...

### **GriefWorks**

welcomes Michael Broome as our new executive director! Michael brings enthusiasm and expertise to take us to the next level in serving the bereaved. Welcome, Michael!



**GriefWorks'** website has been enhanced and updated! Thank you, Katie Mecham for your wonderful work. We encourage you to visit [www.griefworks.org](http://www.griefworks.org) today!

## Upcoming...

### Public Forums:

March 6, 2008, 7:00 p.m.—8:30 p.m.  
March 10, 2008, 10:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

Cost is free to attend. The topic for the March forums is *Is it Grief or Depression?* Please call our office for location details.

### Grief Talk Support Group

Evening Series—Tuesdays, January 22-February 26, 6:30-8 p.m.

Daytime Series -Tuesdays, March 4—April 8; 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

## Ongoing...

### Enumclaw Support Groups:

**GriefWorks** staff facilitate two support groups at the Enumclaw Public Library, 1700 1st St. There is no cost or pre-registration for these twice-monthly groups, which are sponsored by Enumclaw Regional Hospital. For information, call (360) 825-2505 or **GriefWorks**.

### **Grief Support Group:**

First and third Wednesday of each month, 1-2:30 p.m.

### **Caregivers Support Group:**

First and third Thursday of each month, 1-2:30 p.m.



## Ask Dr. Bob

*Everything you wanted to know about loss  
but were afraid to ask*

Dear Readers,

With the recent homicides in the news I am offering a piece from the book I co-authored with Lew Cox, Victim Advocate from Violent Crime Victim Services in Tacoma ([www.vcvs.org](http://www.vcvs.org)). On page 35 in our book *Coping with Traumatic Death: Homicide* we discuss how the world has changed for the family of a homicide victim:

*When a tragedy occurs in our life, our view of the world changes suddenly and permanently. It looks gray and cold. Yet, the world continues to act as if nothing has happened. If you are like many bereaved people, you have lost friends because they could not handle your loss and grief... You may find that most of the people who have surrounded you during this [funeral] period are going back to their families and their respective lives. As time goes by, many of the people who attended the funeral may not be part of your daily life.*

I share this information with you for a reason. Many friends and relatives gradually drift away and actually lose touch with family members who have suffered a tragic death. So in sharing this I offer you the following challenge. If a friend of yours experiences such a tragedy, will you be the person who will move on with life and gradually become a former friend? Or will you be that rare person who stands firm and continues your strong bond with your friend, despite the difficulties that lie ahead?

Take care,

*Dr. Bob Baugher*

*Bob Baugher, Ph.D., has taught for over 25 years and currently is a psychology professor at Highline Community College, where his classes include Death and Life. He has led numerous community and national bereavement workshops as well as written or co-authored several books, including "Coping with Traumatic Death: Homicide." To learn more about or to order his resources, visit [www.griefworks.org](http://www.griefworks.org).*

## About GriefWorks

The mission of **GriefWorks** is to serve as a bereavement resource providing education and support for people grieving a death or seeking to understand the grief process. Since 1998, we have provided healing and hope to more than 9,000 children, teens and adults who experienced a devastating loss.

### How is GriefWorks Supported?

**GriefWorks** relies on generous donations of individuals and organizations. **GriefWorks** is a nonprofit organization, and contributions to **GriefWorks** are tax-deductible.

**GriefWorks** also depends on volunteer involvement. Do you have a few hours to give each week or each month? Or perhaps you can help on a one-time basis for a large event. To learn more about volunteering your time, please e-mail [debbie@griefworks.org](mailto:debbie@griefworks.org).

Would you like to help? Please send your tax-deductible donation to **GriefWorks**, P.O. Box 912, Auburn, WA 98071-0912. Or visit [www.griefworks.org](http://www.griefworks.org) to give on-line. *Thank you!*



## Founder's Corner



Our hearts sink when tragedy strikes. We are unprepared to deal with violent and needless death. We are washed in disbelief, helplessness, and outrage. We are at a loss to know how to begin seeking and/or bringing comfort and support to the emotionally wounded survivors.

"Emotional first aid" is what the **GriefWorks** staff are trained to take to schools, work places, and homes where the "beyond the normal scope of human experience" death has occurred. As professionals, we still experience the same gamut of responses mentioned above. Yet, because of our training, we can offer our caring presence, guidelines for functioning, and tools that nurture the beginning of healing.

Those of us who are trained to do CPR hope never to need that skill. Similarly, at **GriefWorks** we would be quite content never to be called upon to administer emotional first aid or a debriefing session. Yet, after providing support at a catastrophic death incident, we return to the office or to our personal lives, emotionally spent and deeply gratified that we were able to "be there." Any of our staff would tell you that they feel this aspect of our work is a privilege. We don't want a next time, but we are ready. It's what we do.

*Mel Erickson, along with Nanette Flynn, founded GriefWorks in 1998 as a bereavement resource providing education and support for people grieving a death or seeking to understand the grief process.*

### Did you know...

Your tax-deductible gift of \$90 will sponsor individualized support for a grieving child. Your gift of \$155 will sponsor a Family Huddle, enabling us to bring grief support to an entire family in the comfort of their home.

Thank you for partnering with us in mending hearts and re-landscaping lives.