



Safe Harbor Referrals COVID19 Support

Safe Harbor, Abington-Jefferson Health's program for grieving children, teens and their families received its first COVID-19 related intake call this week. The family is seeking support because their loved one died of COVID19. The children are struggling because, not only are they experiencing the natural reactions to the death, but their grief is compounded and complicated because of the unique challenges presented by the virus. Physical distancing both before and after the death, so critical in fighting the spread of the Coronavirus, serve to increase the sense of isolation common following the death of a loved one. Children and teens should be offered a safe place to connect with others who know what they are going through. No one should feel alone during this unprecedented time.

Safe Harbor remains a resource for the community. We are in the midst of learning a new normal, working hard to set up virtual support for families who consider us their lifeline, and adjusting to physical distancing. Through all of this, we remain mobilized to provide the best possible support for this family and the many others we anticipate hearing from in the near future. This includes access to links providing COVID-19 grief related articles, tip sheets and resources.

Drawing on our resources, we are able to provide families with information on what grief looks like for children and teens, how to best talk to children about death, share a "toolkit" that can help them process their grief, and have conversations about how they are feeling and how they can best support each other. As we continue to support our current Safe Harbor families through video support groups, we hope all children and parents will learn about our services and the healing power our grief support groups can provide.

Please know, Safe Harbor is here to help. If you encounter families seeking assistance in speaking to children about the death of a loved one or struggling with grief during these isolating and trying times, please have them call Safe Harbor at **215-481-5983** or visit <https://www.abingtonhealth.org/services-specialties/childrens-health/resources/safe-harbor/> for helpful guidance and information.