

Family Orientation

Family Orientation

Orientations are required for families who wish to participate in our Nights of Support at Good Grief, and are arranged by appointment on an individual basis for each family. Orientations are generally held on Mondays and Thursdays in the late afternoon and early evening, though other times can be arranged if necessary. Please call the Good Grief office and speak with our Director of Family Services, Mary Fleck, (908-522-1999, ext. 8002) if you would like to schedule an orientation for your family.

What to Expect at the Orientation

The orientation takes place in our comfortable Orientation Room and usually lasts for about an hour. This is an opportunity for a family to see our facility and learn about what happens on a Night of Support. It is also a time when the family can share their story and memories about the person who has died, if they choose to do so. Each family member is also invited to make a leaf in honor of the person who died and place it on our Memory Tree. The goal of the orientation is to help each person in the family feel that Good Grief is a safe, comfortable and welcoming place where they will be able to experience the support of their peers. To demonstrate this, we review some of our family friendly rules – a participant can always “pass” if he/she doesn’t want to participate; confidentiality is assured, meaning “what is said here stays here”; and all emotions are welcome, including it’s okay to have fun too.

Enrollment

Following the orientation, if the family decides that they want to enroll at Good Grief, they are asked to complete paperwork to formalize their enrollment in the program. This requires completion of a Family Questionnaire, which is emailed to the family. Once the completed form is returned, the family is assigned to a Night of Support, each member of the family is assigned to a specific peer-support group based on their age and the family is notified about when they can begin to attend. (Click here for [Family Policies](#).)

Your First Night of Support

Attending their first Night of Support can often be stressful for a family since this will be a new experience for them. They might feel anxious about meeting new people and they might feel uncertain about what will actually happen. This is certainly understandable. We try to smooth this transition by having the Director of Family Services welcome them when they arrive, introduce them to other families who are in their peer group, and introduce them to the staff and group facilitators. And we make sure everyone is offered a slice of pizza! Regardless of how anxious family members might feel when they arrive for their first Night of Support, they usually leave with a smile of relief on their faces having already made some new friends who understand their situation.

(Click here for a description of a [Night of Support](#).)