



SAFE CROSSINGS
FOUNDATION



ANNUAL REPORT

2021 EDITION

Your Gifts Made a Huge Impact

Established in 1989, Safe Crossings Foundation (SCF) is dedicated to helping grieving children heal and thrive. By researching and funding leading-edge grief recovery programs, we provide resources to help kids safely navigate loss, rediscover joy, and emerge as emotionally healthy and resilient members of society.

Thanks to our generous donors, we are making a larger impact on the community every year!

Your donations made it possible to continue providing free support to grieving children and their families through programs tailored to their needs.

GRANTEE HIGHLIGHTS

656 youth were served by Safe Crossings Program

Safe Crossings Program serves youth between the ages of 6-18 by providing support through in-home and virtual individual counseling sessions, phone and email consultations, and virtual holiday events.

SAFE CROSSINGS PROGRAM HEALS

After the cancellation of Camp Erin in 2020, Safe Crossings Program counselors were eager to offer a virtual camp experience. In Summer 2021, Camp Erin – King County went virtual for the first time ever. A total of 60 kids and teens attended two- to three-hour online sessions over a four-day period.



Prior to camp, the kids picked up their supplies for the week and met their camp counselors during a masked meet-up. Items included teddy bears, arts and crafts materials for activities, fidget bags with toys and snacks, and supplies to make a drum. Counselors also prepared paddles for kids to show any time during the session to support others or show their feelings about something. They could show thumbs up, thumbs down, and a heart.



During the second day, kids did a special project called Drum it Out. Every camper constructed their own drums using the five-gallon bucket their supplies came in and various colors of duct tape. Their session facilitator then took them through the program, teaching them how to use drumming as a coping tool, a vehicle for healthy expression and a fun way to connect with other kids. Some kids were so elated, they wanted to drum it out every camp session that week!

A week after camp, a camp reunion was held for campers to reconnect with their peers and counselors. They split into teams and played Camp Jeopardy, with categories such as "What Did We Do at Camp Erin" and "Coping Skills." From the beginning of Camp Erin – King County and beyond, Safe Crossings Program counselors were there to support each child and foster a safe, healthy community for campers to explore their grief.

GRANTEE HIGHLIGHTS

YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK



Eluna and Art With Heart teamed up again in 2021 to provide Draw it Out books to over 2,600 kids nationally.



Bridges Center for Grieving Children served 420 youth in online programs, and provided two Introduction to Grief Trainings for grief support volunteers.



Crisis Connections provided support for 26 youth after a loss by suicide.



The Healing Center provided group support and materials for 131 children and their families.



Seattle Children's Journey Program served 230 youth through their family counseling programs, providing services in English and Spanish.



Our Treehouse provided support for 401 grieving youth.

[Read more on page 4.](#)



Wild Grief served 70 youth in 15 counties across Washington state.

[Read more on page 5.](#)



Youth Eastside Services supported 109 youth through evidence-based and age-appropriate counseling.

A TOTAL OF 2,654 KIDS WERE SERVED IN 2021.

In addition to those 2,654 kids, Safe Crossings Foundation grantees provided 217 activity kits to support kids grieving at home.

2,171 YOUTH WERE SERVED THROUGH PEER AND FAMILY- BASED SUPPORT GROUPS



A PLACE FOR GRIEF

FINDING HEALING AMONG PEERS AT OUR TREEHOUSE



It was a Tuesday when Lauryn received a call from her mom informing her that her dad had been hospitalized. Suffering a heart attack, Dario was sent directly to the hospital ICU where he was put on life support. When Lauryn arrived at the hospital, her dad's condition was looking bleak. Lauryn was the one who made the decision to take him off life support. "He passed away in the ICU," says Lauryn. "That was really hard since he and I were really close."

Dario was a well-known member of the Harley Davidson chapter in Seattle. After his death, the community organized one last ride for him. With a police escort and 80 bikers, Lauryn rode her dad's bike with his best friend and his ashes in the motorcycle's side-pocket. "The support system I have, with his friends, are all in Seattle," Lauryn shares, "Living up in Bellingham was really hard. I felt isolated and alone."



Lacking a support system, Lauryn's therapist introduced her to Our Treehouse's Young Adult group. She attends meetings over Zoom every first and third Monday of the month. When the Young Adult group meets, they start with a check-in, move on to an activity, and are given opportunities to process their takeaways. "It's really helped me, talking about my dad," says Lauryn. "I felt isolated and alone, but with Our Treehouse I never felt that way."

The group often does show and tell, when Lauryn and her peers share belongings valuable to their loved ones. During one of these sessions, Lauryn shared her dad's Harley Davidson vest. He always used to put his vests on the passenger seat; now, Lauryn keeps them on her passenger seat. "It's helped me move forward with my grief, not past it," Lauryn reflects. Our Treehouse gives young people like Lauryn a new support system of peers to grow and heal with and a place of connection between other young adults who have all lost a loved one.

WHERE YOUR DONATIONS GO

We at Safe Crossings Foundation know it's important for donors to understand the impact your donations are having on the lives of grieving children in your community. Here are just a few examples of what we are able to do with your gifts.

\$150

Art therapy training for one adult

\$300

Traumatic grief support and care packages for three families

\$600

Three guides for Family Journey Hike

\$750

Safe Crossings Program translation services for a family

\$1,000

Six-week long support group for bilingual families

\$3,000

Sponsors Camp Erin - King County for 10 campers

\$5,000

Year-long grief support for five children

"Our family lost Seamus' older brother to suicide not long ago. Wild Grief helped our family to stay a family through our loss. Although it is for the kids, this program supports and encourages families to be together, healing outside in nature."

—The Stringer Family, Family Hike Participants



CONNECTING AND HEALING THROUGH NATURE

HOW WILD GRIEF COMBINES VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON PROGRAMS

After a year of virtual programs, Wild Grief returned to the trail in 2021 with in-person guided walks and all-day hikes. A combination of virtual and in-person programs allowed Wild Grief to serve 70 youth under the age of 25 – a 75% increase from the previous year's 40 youth participants. Four virtual programs and four in-person programs were offered, all designed to respond to different needs.

A popular program, Hike Habitat, was offered both virtually and in-person. While the virtual Hike Habitat is typically attended by adults, the in-person Hike Habitat is frequented by young adults and families with young children. One parent who attended Hike Habitat, Steven, shared, "I attended my first hike with Wild Grief with my youngest son who lost his mother at the age of ten." Like many young families experiencing grief, this father-son duo has found it hard to set aside time in their busy lives to process their grief. "Having a resource like Wild Grief is extremely helpful and comforting to us," says Steve. "I am grateful to have a time we can set aside each month to hike with our new community and be with our grief in nature." Hike Habitat is a short hike closer to town and is more accessible to families in south Puget Sound with younger children who may not be up for driving far or doing a longer hike.

For individuals who seek longer opportunities to connect with nature, Wild Grief offers Day Hikes and Teen Backpacking Trips. By offering a combination of virtual and in-person programs, the staff and volunteers of Wild Grief expanded their reach to serve grieving youth in a way that is both meaningful and accessible to them. Looking forward, they plan to continue taking their learnings to meet the needs of as many grieving youth possible.

"Losing my mom was not in my control, but learning how I could process her death was. My time with Wild Grief was pivotal in my lifelong mental health journey."

—Julia, Young Adult Program Participant



INCREASING ACCESS TO GRIEF SUPPORT

PROVIDING FREE AND INCLUSIVE SERVICES

All individuals experience grief and loss in their lifetime. However, while loss is universal, grief is contextual. The grief a child experiences losing a loved one is different from the grief a young adult experiences.

We research and fund diverse programs that respond to the various needs of children, teens, and young adults in our community. Our partners offer a variety of services inclusive to individual needs, such as age demographic, type of loss, language, and cultural traditions. Thanks to your support, all programs are provided free of charge to families.

In 2021, we widened our geographic reach and increased access to grief support services for historically marginalized populations. Our partners served 842 youth from low-income households in 15 counties across Washington State, developed training in cultural responsiveness for 75 professionals, and offered a new six-week program for Asian American Pacific Islander youth.

northwest conference ON CHILDHOOD GRIEF

On March 11, 2021, Safe Crossings Foundation held our 7th annual Northwest Conference on Childhood Grief and our first ever virtual conference. More than 70 professionals attended this conference to learn from grief support experts located all over the United States. Topics included the intersection of grief and trauma, virtual memorial services, grief yoga, and facilitating virtual school groups.

"It was an excellent event. The breakout groups I attended were some of the more engaging presentations I've joined in years!"

—Bethany, Grief Support Provider



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