



SAFE CROSSINGS
FOUNDATION



ANNUAL REPORT

2022^{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 make it possible to continue providing free support to grieving children and their families through programs tailored to their needs.

GRANTEE HIGHLIGHTS

SAFE CROSSINGS PROGRAM HEALS

Leslie's family was first introduced to Safe Crossing Program in 2018 when her children's grandmother died. Leslie's five children were devastated and needed support processing their grief after losing someone so close to them.



At the time, Lilly, Jayden, Kyler, Kayson, and Ava felt lost without her. Because their grandmother was being cared for by Providence Hospice, Leslie was able to connect with Safe Crossings Program counselor Amy. She and another counselor at the time, Makenzie, visited Leslie's home several times, playing games, making art, and working on grief projects with the kids. "They opened a space for the children and built so much trust with them."

In March of 2020, the family experienced a tragedy. Kyler, Leslie's middle child, died of meningitis at the age of 7. Leslie remembers it to this day, "I did not know how I was going to function again, I was so broken." The family turned to Amy, Makenzie, and Safe Crossings Program immediately. It had only been about a year since the family last worked with the program. The counselors picked up right where they had left off. But due to COVID-19, Amy and Makenzie showed up virtually for the family rather than meeting in person. Leslie shares, "They provided the hug of the week."

After some time had passed, the Safe Crossings Program counselors transitioned to meeting with Leslie and her kids twice a month. Her two boys were introduced to Alex, another counselor with Safe Crossings Program. Alex jumped right in and started playing and drawing with the boys: "He would meet them right where they were." Two visits a month turned into one visit per month, and eventually, Leslie and her family were ready to close this chapter. "We got our wings back!" Safe Crossings Program filled the gap when Leslie's family needed it most.

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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, school groups, phone and email consultations, and virtual holiday events.

GRANTEE HIGHLIGHTS

A PLACE FOR GRIEF AT CAMP ERIN

Vivian's final day of second grade was the day her father, Victor, went to the emergency room. A Type 2 diabetic with undetected heart disease, he suffered a heart attack and then a hemorrhagic stroke while on life support. Victor was 49 years old when he died following emergency neurosurgery.



Vivian last talked with him in the hospital over Zoom. He said, "I love you. Brush your teeth." A former teacher with a Ph.D. in education, Victor had a keen interest in Vivian's activities. They played chess and crafted dollhouse furniture, made homemade slime, and baked brownies. "He helped me sell Girl Scout cookies and build forts in the living room with blankets and chairs," Vivian recalls.

Vivian's mom, Annie, was committed to getting grief support for Vivian. She already knew about Camp Erin-King County, and she also connected Vivian, her teachers, and school administrators with Safe Crossings Program counselor, Makenzie.

In 2021, Camp Erin was virtual. "Picking up 'Camp in a Box' was a fun experience," Annie remembers. "Counselors were decked out in Camp Erin T-shirts--even a tutu--blowing bubbles! The crafts and activities were very thoughtfully planned out." Vivian enjoyed making a drum to play during the virtual drum circle.



In 2022, Camp Erin offered a one-day, in-person camp. "I was in a cabin with my friend," Vivian remembers. "We made a pretty hanging craft with the pictures of our parents who are gone. I got to spray-dye my hair pink and bring home a teddy bear!" This year, Camp Erin will offer the full two-night experience, and Vivian is one of the first campers to sign up. She is very excited to attend overnight grief camp.



When asked what offerings like Camp Erin mean to her as a parent, Annie offers this reflection: "I'm so thankful for the support. Since Vivian has much longer in life to mourn her father's death, it's amazing that she has this support at a young age. These programs have connected us with community, coping resources, and hopeful feelings about moving forward." Safe Crossings Foundation donors provide the critical funding for programs like Camp Erin-King County so kids like Vivian can heal and thrive.

GRANTEE HIGHLIGHTS

YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK



Eluna and Art With Heart teamed up again in 2022 to provide Draw it Out books to over 2,200 kids nationally.

MORE THAN 3,300 KIDS WERE SERVED BY THESE PARTNERS

In addition, Safe Crossings Foundation grantees provided 200 activity kits to support kids grieving at school and in their homes.



Crisis Connections provided support for 250 youth after a loss by suicide.



Diaspora Family Healing Network

DFHN served over 100 youth through their youth grief basketball clinic and individual counseling.

[Read more on page 5.](#)



Griever's Library opened their first community grief library, developed an online grief book database, and provided 1,500 books to youth in the Puget Sound.



THE HEALING CENTER
a grief support community
adults • children • families

The Healing Center provided group and individual support for 150 children and their families.



Bridges Center for Grieving Children served 420 youth through group counseling.

Grantees provided 30,000 hours of free grief support services to kids and families.



Seattle Children's Journey Program served 300 youth through their family counseling programs, providing services in English and Spanish.



Our Treehouse provided support for 450 grieving youth.



Wild Grief provided peer support for more than 100 youth and families by connecting them to nature.



Youth Eastside Services supported 80 youth through evidence-based and age-appropriate counseling.

HEALING WITHIN COMMUNITY

FINDING HEALING AMONG PEERS AT DIASPORA FAMILY HEALING NETWORK

Loss is a universal experience, but grief itself is contextual for every person. Samiira Mohamed, the Executive Director of the Diaspora Family Healing Network, knows this personally. In the 1990's, her mother gathered her family and migrated to Canada to escape from the Somali war. Samiira's entire family successfully made the trip except for her grandfather, who was killed in the war. As a little girl, Samiira recalls trying to talk to her mother about her grandfather, his life and death, but "my mom would always shut down and storm off." Samiira came to understand that in Somali culture, grief and mental health are not commonly discussed. This is what inspired Samiira to become a nurse, and receive her master's and doctorate in nursing.



In 2022, Samiira partnered with Safe Crossings Foundation to start the Somali Youth Grief Counseling Program. This two-month project consisted of a support group for 25 Somali youth from refugee households who have experienced traumatic grief related to their resettlement process. Following the ending of the support group, Samiira hosted the Somali Youth Basketball Clinic for Somali and other East African youth to have access to community, physical activity, and mental health counselors.



Her goal was to combine the Somali culture with proven mental health techniques to provide balanced and enriching care to the kids and teens participating in the program. Samiira engages the youth using techniques such as cognitive behavioral therapy, traditional narrative therapy that incorporates Somali storytelling, and art therapy. For many of the participants, this type of program is a new experience that can feel frightening and scary. When verbal expression isn't enough, the youth express themselves through drawing, music, and even poetry. Because of the Somali Youth Grief Counseling Program and others like it, access to grief support is expanding to diverse communities across Washington state.

WHERE YOUR DONATIONS GO

Safe Crossings Foundation knows it's important for you 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 fund with your gifts.

\$200

Art therapy training for one adult

\$500

Traumatic grief support and care packages for three families

\$750

Three guides for Family Journey Hike

\$1,000

Safe Crossings Program translation services for a family

\$1,500

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

LISTENING AND LEARNING FROM OUR YOUTH STAKEHOLDERS

Safe Crossings Foundation takes a big-picture approach to analyzing community needs, resources, and gaps in services. As a leader in funding services that help grieving children heal, we are committed to partnering with the youth we serve. For that reason, Executive Director, Karen Schrantz, believed it was time to develop a youth advisory board to support our mission.

In April 2021, two high-school brothers, Kyle and Connor, joined forces with Safe Crossings Foundation to begin the Youth Advisory Council for school-aged youth who have experienced a death in their family. Following in their footsteps in 2022, two young adults, Taylor and Franqui, came together to create the Young Professionals Advisory Council for young adults. The Councils collaborate to meet their goal of broadening free grief support services to youth and their families after the loss of a loved one.

The Councils' focus includes proposing new grief support resources and designing approaches to reach as many grieving children as possible, especially those who would not otherwise find support. At the end of 2022, the Councils proposed to host a youth-led event for other kids and their families looking for grief support. Together, the Councils and SCF staff hosted the first-ever grief resource fair in early 2023. The Councils continue to partner with staff in event planning, providing creative ideas to increase access, and ending the stigma around grief.

northwest conference ON CHILDHOOD GRIEF

On April 7, 2022, Safe Crossings Foundation held the 8th annual Northwest Conference on Childhood Grief. Over 50 professionals attended our second successful virtual conference to learn from grief support experts located across the United States. Four facilitators shared their expertise covering topics such as the impact of COVID-19 on youth, clinical skills after a traumatic death, grief and loss in immigrant youth, and a session of grief yoga.

"I enjoyed the breakout rooms, which allowed me to process the information in a way that helped me integrate it into my personal understanding."

—Cynthia, Grief Support Provider



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- Volunteer on a Committee
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