

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Concurrent Session 2B

Children and Grief: A Journey of Healing

In-person

*One and a half (1.5) hours for Social Work CEU has been approved for this session.

Bio:

Jennifer Kimlingen is a licensed master social worker with additional training in grief and bereavement, including a level one certification in complicated grief therapy. Jennifer believes that no one should grieve alone and has a strong passion for working with grieving children. Jennifer's passion for this work came after personally experiencing multiple losses early in life and thus pursuing both her undergraduate and graduate social work degrees from Adelphi University, with high honors and completion in 2014. Jennifer's social work background includes working with children and family programs, managing residential housing for adults diagnosed with a severe mental illness and hospice social work. Jennifer is currently working with bereaved individuals and families as a bereavement specialist with Good Shepherd Hospice.

Session Objectives:

1. Participants will evaluate their own comfort level with grief and prior experiences with loss. How did your family experience loss? As we know, children grieve as well as the adults in their lives.
2. Participants will gain a basic understanding of how children & adolescents experience grief and loss.
3. Participants will learn how to best support grieving children through encouraging expression with creative play and therapeutic activities.
4. Participants will become aware of red flags in the grieving journey for children and when to seek intensive mental health supports.

Short Description:

This presentation is designed for the professional working in end of life care. Currently, "according to the Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model (CBEM), a quantitative statistical tool, one in 14 children in the United States will experience the death of a parent or sibling before the age of 18—with estimates of the number affected more than doubling for youth up to age 25." (Burns, M., Griese, B., King, S., & Talmi, A. (2020). Childhood bereavement: Understanding prevalence and related adversity in the United States. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 90(4), 391-405. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000442>). We also know that with the COVID-19 pandemic, children and adolescents are experiencing loss and grief related to a sense of normalcy and community. This presentation will assist professionals by becoming better prepared to meet the needs of an increasingly vulnerable population.