

Media Advisory

Children's Grief Centre Text & Chat Services launch

On March 19, 2020, The Children's Grief Centre is set to launch their new text and chat services exclusively for grieving youth. These services are the first of their kind in our province and they will provide specialized online support to children and teens who are struggling with a death or advanced illness of someone close to them.

Alberta's population includes over 1 million children and teens. Research suggests that 4% will experience the death of a parent by the age of 19 – this represents nearly 41,000 Albertan children and teens. This does not include the number of children that are impacted by the death of siblings, friends, and other family members. Traumatic childhood experiences, such as the death of a parent, can lead to physical and mental health issues later in life.

These services are especially important today, when social distance is being encouraged throughout the country. Almost all Canadian children have a cell phone by the age of 11 and the majority of them own these for the sole purpose of texting. The Children's Grief Centre Text & Chat services will now help to eliminate barriers for youth who are unable to access services in-person.

We have been providing support to grieving children and teens for over 25 years and the feedback from those who have accessed our in-person support is outstanding.

"We are very close and my sons knew they could talk to me but it was hard. I was dealing with grief myself. It was good for them to have extra help and when my youngest son started having nightmares it was easier for him to talk to someone on the outside."

- Mother of two whose husband died of cancer

The new text and chat services have been funded through the generous support of the Calgary Foundation, Spruce Meadows Leg Up Foundation, the Children's Hospital Aid Society, the Government of Alberta Community Initiatives Program, Ernie & Leah Hagel, and the TELUS Friendly Futures Foundation.

Given the current health crisis with COVID-19 and the state of emergency in Calgary, we will not be hosting live interviews at our site. We can however provide any media contacts with pictures of the first live text & chat sessions on March 19, 2020. Alternately, you can schedule interviews or request information using the contact information below.

Available for Interviews:

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