

What is the "Community Bereavement Connection"?

It is a network of groups and agencies that provide supportive services to those who are experiencing grief. Grief can be a very lonely and difficult experience. Knowing that others have experienced similar losses and have found caring support can help. Archuleta, La Plata and Montezuma counties offer many such services that can help ease the loneliness.

We are never prepared for the death of a loved one. The shock, pain, anger, sadness, feelings of guilt, longing, loneliness and confusion seem to overtake us. We are searching for answers and seem to find only endless questions.

To help understand and cope with grief, we would like to suggest some resources that are available to help work through the grieving process. One step toward healing is sharing with other people who have experienced similar loss through death. They may be better able to understand the feelings and frustrations. Support groups consisting of other grievers can provide a safe, confidential environment in which to share and exchange the feelings and problems associated with grief. Following is a list of the support available in the area.

****Note: Please be sure to call and check on meeting locations and times, as they are subject to change.**

LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS

ALZHEIMER'S FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

The La Plata County group meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Alzheimer's Association Office, 701 Camino Del Rio, third floor, in Durango. For information call 259-0122. The Archuleta County group meets at noon the last Monday of each month at the Pine Ridge Extended Care Center, 119 Bastille Dr. in Pagosa Springs (731-4330).

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

The ACS staff in Durango serves communities in SW Colorado and in the Farmington area. The Durango office is located at 1800 E. 3rd Ave., Suite 101. Call Kari Slingerland at (970) 247-0278 or The American Cancer Society toll free at (866) 736-6849.

- ***Cancer Support Group***

This group meets at 5:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Durango Cancer Center, 1 Mercado, Mercy Regional Medical Center in Durango. It is open to anyone who has been impacted by cancer such as a patient, caregiver, family member or friends. The service is free. Contact Carol at 385-4746 or 247-0278 for more information.

- ***Reach to Recovery Program***

This group is available to anyone seeking support or information before and after breast cancer treatment or reconstruction. Please call 247-0278 for information.

- ***Road to Recovery***

This service provides a driver to people going to/from chemo as well as hotel space if needed. Call 247-0278

- ***Women's Support Group***

This group meets the first Saturday each month at noon at the First United Methodist Church, 2917 Aspen Dr. in Durango. Bring your brown bag lunch. Call Hazel at 247-5751 or Lil at 259-1181.

- ***Look Good and Feel Better***

This is an education and support program for people currently going through cancer treatment. Call 247-0278.

HOSPICE OF MERCY

Hospice of Mercy provides a variety of bereavement services, including individual and family grief counseling, as well as support groups.

- ***Adult Grief Education & Support Groups***

This group combines an educational and supportive approach to help bereaved persons move toward resolving their grief in a structured, confidential environment. Experienced bereavement facilitators conduct each two-hour session once a week for 8 weeks. Homework projects and exercises are encouraged to promote growth through the grief process. Regular attendance is required since each session builds upon the previous one. Persons who are at the point of wanting to work through their loss find this non-confrontational support group very helpful. Groups are offered two times a year and are open to anyone in the community who has lost a loved one due to death. Call Kati Bachman at 382-2032 for information.

- ***"Tree of Light" Remembrance Service***

An annual remembrance service held in La Plata and Archuleta counties each December to celebrate the memory of family members and friends who have died.

- ***"Annual Memorial" Service***

An annual service held at Mercy in December to celebrate the memory of family members and friends who have died the previous year.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SOUTHWEST COLORADO

The Compassionate Friends is an international self help organization offering support and understanding to parents who have suffered the loss of a child. Immediate family members are included. Compassionate Friends meets the first Monday of each month at 7:00 pm at Hood Mortuary. Call Sandy Baumann at 970-375-9589 or email her at tcfdurango@gmail.com.

SAN JUAN BASIN AREA AGENCY ON AGING

This agency offers home services such as snow removal, heavy cleaning, and installation of home safety devices, painting, plumbing, carpentry and electrical repairs. It also offers group and home-delivered meals through the Nutrition Services program. The office is located in Pagosa Springs. Call Christina Knoell at 970-264-0501 or cell at 970-403-2165.

WESTERN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE

This service is by appointment only, and is provided to employees who have Employee Assistance Benefits through their employer. WEAS is located at the Mercy Medical Plaza Suite 248. Call 764-3760 for more information. Assistance is provided for:

Marriage/Relationship Problems • Family Issues
Personal Emotional Issues • Stress Related Problems
Drug/Alcohol Problems • Financial Pressures
Legal Matters • Grief Related Issues

PRIVATE GRIEF GROUPS

Grief Center of Southwest Colorado – A non profit center offering bereavement programs for adults and children. Call Judy Austin 970-764-7142 for information.

Individual Counselors – Hood Mortuary does not recommend any one counselor. We are aware of the following counselors who specialize in grief and hold periodic grief groups:

Julie Madden 970-749-7547 Norm Gottlieb 970-749-1357

Judy Austin 970-764-7142 Brenda Diller 970-422-6102

Janet Curry 970-779-0611

*If you are a counselor and would like to have your name added to our list, please contact Hood Mortuary.