

# I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

**One page only.** This page will be shared electronically with Grant Committee Members & Fund Advisors.

Note: If Philanthropy Network of Greater Philadelphia's Common Grant Application is used, the Community Foundation's

Summary Sheet **MUST** accompany application.

To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org)

**Date 7/31/19**

## Contact Information

Organization Name: A Haven

Address: 623 N. Pottstown Pike, Exton, PA 19341

Phone: 1-484-693-0160

Website: [www.ahaven.org](http://www.ahaven.org)

Year Incorporated: 2017

FEIN: 81-3342825

Executive Director/CEO Name: Michelle Noble

Executive Director/CEO E-mail: [michelle@ahaven.org](mailto:michelle@ahaven.org)

Board of Directors Chair Name: Mary Ann Hughes

Primary Contact Name: Michelle Noble

Primary Contact E-mail: [michelle@ahaven.org](mailto:michelle@ahaven.org)

Has your nonprofit ever applied to the Community Foundation? Yes \_\_\_ No X Not Sure \_\_\_

Has your nonprofit ever received funding from the Community Foundation? Yes \_\_\_ No X Not Sure \_\_\_

\_\_\_ Donor Advised Fund(s) \_\_\_ Fund for Chester County \_\_\_ Don't know/Not sure

## Field/s of Interest:

\_\_\_ Arts, Culture & Humanities

\_\_\_ Environment/Animal Welfare

\_\_\_ Education

X Health

X Human Services

\_\_\_ Religion

## Organization Information:

**Geographic Area Served** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):

Chester County

**Describe Population Served and Annual Number of People Served:** A Haven serves children ages 3 to 18 and their caregivers. Over 150 grieving families, as well as 50 grieving teens in our drop off teen night and over 50 students in seven school grief groups.

**Mission:** To partner with grieving families by providing grief support, outreach to our community, education and hope. A Haven helps children grieve through a family-centered approach.

**Proposal Summary:** A Haven is requesting general operating support to continue providing access to critical grief support to the children and their families in Chester County who need this service. A Haven is the only agency in Chester County providing this service, which research has proven is crucial to a child's emotional, social and physical development after experiencing the loss of a loved one, friend, or classmate.

## **If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:**

\_\_\_ Mission, Vision & Strategy \_\_\_ Governance & Leadership \_\_\_ Strategic Relationships

\_\_\_ Fundraising & Development \_\_\_ Technology Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Budget** \$ 183,000

2 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

71 % of budget for program expenses

7 # of Board Volunteers

28 % of budget for administrative expenses

10 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

<1     % of budget for fundraising expenses          80     # of Volunteer Hours  
*100 % total*

**Top 3-5 funding sources:**

Larry & Kathy Smedley - \$11,600

Private Foundation (requested anonymity) - \$10,000

Fann Family Foundation -- \$8,000-10,000 promised for 2019

Pending:

West Chester Soiree - \$20,000 - September 2019

Capacity Building Grant - National Alliance for Grieving Children \$10,000 - October 2019

Whitford Charitable Fund \$10,000 - October 2019

**Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$ 7,500**

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.*

### 1. Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements and distinctiveness

The concept for *A Haven* originated in 2015 with two women who were passionate about supporting grieving children and families. Michelle Noble and Liz Dreibelbis tracked locations of area grief centers. The gap was clear—Chester County was the least served county surrounding Philadelphia. They knew they needed to fill that need and set out to do just that.

With more than 15 years of combined experience in bereavement and supporting grief organizations, Liz and Michelle are strongly connected to the grief and bereavement community. Because of that network, they have built a strong team and established Chester County's first, long-term grief center—A Haven. Their main goal is to help children grieve through a family-centered approach and educate the community in how to support grieving children and families. *A Haven* is set apart from other grief programs because of their dedication to help families as a whole navigate grief, in addition to peer-to-peer support.

*A Haven*, a 501(c)3 agency, began offering services in January 2017, serving grieving children and their families in the community. *A Haven* operates with two paid staff members—Executive Director Michelle Noble (f/t) and a Clinical Director Liz Dreibelbis (p/t) and 20 trained volunteer grief facilitators. (*A Haven* offers trainings to human service agencies, school districts, hospice centers, and churches throughout Chester County and beyond.) The organization relies heavily on volunteers and donors to do this much-needed work in the community.

*A Haven* offers various grief support groups and grief resources for children (ages 3-18) and their caregiver(s). All our support groups are offered at **no cost** to families. *A Haven* professionals also facilitate in school grief groups, especially where incidences of student suicide have occurred.

Current groups include: Parent Loss, Sibling Loss, General Loss and Teen Nights. *A Haven* also provides grief education and trainings for schools, churches and communities, which include: childhood bereavement, supporting a grieving family, self-care, as well as tailored trainings for the community's needs.

Since its beginning, *A Haven* has served over 150 families and trained 300 community members to work with grieving children and youth. The agency has over 10 community partners who refer children and youth in need of grief counseling. *A Haven* also has provided seven grief support groups in five area schools in the county.

### 2. Funding request

**Key initiatives:** *A Haven* respectfully requests a grant in the amount of \$7,500 to continue its work serving grieving children and their families. Our model is a family-centered one, which differs from other grief centers in that the program offers support to the caregivers, as well as the grieving child.

Most child grief centers only focus on peer-to-peer support, but *A Haven* found this approach, though somewhat beneficial, was missing a key component to healing for children. Grieving the death of a loved one affects every member in the family, so *A Haven* helps children grieve through a family-centered approach. There is strong evidence that the family environment, after the death of a loved one, contribute to long-term psychological reactions in children (Nickerson, 2011). It has also been found that if healthy family communication is increased, it can actually lessen grief (Mahon, M, 2009). In addition to family communication, how a parent or guardian grieves is the number one determining factor on how a child grieves. *A Haven* believes that if there is a failure to empower and support the family unit, an imperative piece in supporting a grieving child is missed. *A Haven* also believes that it must empower the adults in children's lives and model healthy ways of grieving as a family unit. This family-focused model cannot be found anywhere else in the surrounding area.

### Specific needs and issues to be addressed:

Research reveals that grieving children, who don't have the support they need, are more likely to struggle in school, die by suicide, get involved in crime, and engage in risky behavior—such as sex, unsafe driving, and violence. These findings sound disturbing. However, research also proves, that with a healthy support system, grieving

children can be more resilient to future trials than children who have not lost a parent—meaning that the right support can have long-term positive effects on a grieving child’s life. *A Haven* provides that healthy support system through its support groups.

*A Haven* focuses on three areas of need:

### **1. Support Groups**

We facilitate ongoing peer-to-peer support groups for children ages 3-18 and their caregiver(s) who have experienced the death of a loved one, as well as family groups. This is *A Haven*’s distinct family-centric model. In addition to peer-to-peer support, *A Haven* is dedicated to helping families navigate grief as a whole. There is strong evidence that after the death of a loved one, the family environment affects the long-term psychological well-being of children. Our family groups are essential for children to learn how to grieve in the context of their family.

For those children who don’t have access to healthy support, we partner with local schools to offer grief support.

### **2. Outreach Support**

*A Haven* saw the need to support the local community when death hits close to home. As a result, we support local organizations or communities that have experienced the death of a teacher, friend, student or significant community member. We do this by providing education on how to support grieving youth and facilitate support groups for community leaders, students or friends to process grief in a safe space. We also provide in-person or phone support to any parent, friend, community member on how to navigate grief in their family and/or how to best support the grieving child in their life.

### **3. Training the Community**

Supporting grieving youth has a big impact on their resilience. By training and equipping the community on how to best support them, as well as identifying their coping mechanisms, we can help to insure the health of our youth. We believe proactive knowledge is better than reactive knowledge. Our goal is to equip the community with tools, so that when a crisis happens, they are ready. *A Haven* has already trained 300 community members in grief support.

### **Importance of funding now:**

All of *A Haven*’s programs are free of charge, but there are operating costs to providing them. We need another part-time or a full-time certified counselor to alleviate some of the clinical responsibilities from *A Haven*’s Executive Director, who must divide her time and energies between programming and administrative duties. To be prepared for the fall programs, *A Haven* will need 32 specially trained volunteers for the groups. There are currently 20 volunteers trained to work with groups. (There is no individual counseling.)

Also, there are other operational costs, such as rent, utilities, travel expense, marketing and training materials, that must be met. *A Haven*’s board members give what they can in time, talent and financial underwriting, but, as the agency’s reputation has spread and the client base has grown, there is a substantial need for funding beyond *A Haven*’s current individual donors and local fundraisers.

More importantly, the need for grief services is growing in Chester County due to the recent rise in youth suicides in area schools, such as Downingtown and Coatesville. The continuing escalation of deaths from opioids throughout the county has also been a factor. *A Haven* wants to make sure that it will be in a position to meet the needs of the families, friends and communities impacted by these upsetting trends. Therefore, it is necessary for *A Haven* to reach out to area funders, such as the Chester County Community Foundation, for help to underwrite its programs and to enable the agency to meet any and all requests for grief support.

### **How impact and results will be demonstrated:**

*A Haven* professionals use testing to evaluate the impact of their family-centered approach. They administer pre- and post-testing to the children and families who receive grief support services. This is done to determine the specific needs of each child and the level of grief each child is experiencing. Every individual grieves differently, so a pre-test will help assess that. The post-tests help gauge how *A Haven*’s grief support has helped the child and family cope with the grief they are experiencing.

*A Haven* professionals also consider anecdotal information, such as how the parents see the child's behavior or school socialization has improved, to assess impact and results of the grief support on each child and family. The trained volunteers in charge of the different grief groups report on how the child is participating in the group's activities and with the other children in the group. Compelling testimonials from parents and the children themselves also provide insight into the impact and results of the grief support.

The following are examples of testimonials from grieving children:

"I love coming to *A Haven* because we always express our emotions. I think it is good to do that." -

Participant, age 9

"I'm thankful my dad got to know me for 8 years." - Participant, age 10

"The word 'trust' isn't a word in my vocabulary but because of this group it's becoming one." - School Participant, age 18

"*A Haven's* teen night is the only place I feel safe to talk about my dad." -

Participant, age 16

Funding from the Chester County Community Foundation will be gratefully welcomed and will provide positive support to a grieving child's life, which will help redirect the child from a negative life trajectory to a positive one; helping to increase their coping and resilience. (Leuecken, Kraft, Appelhans and Elders, 2009) One in 13 children in Pennsylvania will experience the death of a sibling or parent before they reach age 18. That means that there are potentially 9,000 grieving children in Chester County. A significant number! And these statistics do not even include other impactful relationships. In addition to the death of a loved one, research revealed that 90% of students will experience the death of someone they know before they graduate high school.

Without *A Haven*, there are little resources available in Chester County specifically designed to support children who have experienced the death of a loved one. ***A Haven is unique.***

*A Haven* hopes to be able to partner with the Chester County Community Foundation in 2019-20 to benefit the grieving children and their parents in Chester County who come to us for support. Thank you!

### III. ATTACHMENTS

#### *E-mail or mail this support information*

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
3. Most recent annual report and financial statement, audited if available
4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year and current fiscal year to date
5. If capacity building initiative, itemized budget (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
6. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.

*If Philanthropy Network of Greater Philadelphia's Common Grant Application is used, the Community Foundation's Summary Sheet MUST accompany application. Available at [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org)*

- **E-mail proposals to [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org).** Receipt will be confirmed by e-mail.
  - Please contact Grants Administrator Kevin Baffa at (610) 696-8211 [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org) with questions.

*Chester County*  
**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**  
*Connecting people who care with causes that matter,  
so their legacies make a difference.*

*Chester County*  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

## WHAT IS CAPACITY BUILDING?

**Capacity building helps bring a nonprofit to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity, in order to more effectively and efficiently fulfill its mission.**

Capacity building may include (but is not limited to) projects which address:

- **MISSION, VISION & STRATEGY**  
Organizational Assessment - Strategic Planning - Financial Planning
- **GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP**  
Board Development - Executive Transition/Succession Planning - Leadership Development - Staff Training & Professional Development
- **STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS**  
Coalition Building – Collaboration - Mergers & Acquisitions - Strategic Restructuring
- **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**  
Major Gift Donor Identification, Cultivation, Development & Stewardship - Development Campaigns (Annual, Capital, Planned Giving) - Earned Income Development - Social Enterprise Feasibility & Development - Marketing, Branding & Communications
- **OPERATIONS**  
Business Continuity Planning - Financial Management - Human Resources - Volunteer Management - Industry Certification - Risk Management - Technology Improvements

Capacity Building Grants have been used to fund:

- Strategic plan development
- Technology enhancements, including website design; donor tracking software; computer hardware
- Marketing plan & marketing materials development
- Financial management and internal control system improvements

- **E-mail proposals to [grants@chescofc.org](mailto:grants@chescofc.org).** Receipt will be confirmed by e-mail.
  - Please contact Grants Administrator Kevin Baffa at (610) 696-8211 [grants@chescofc.org](mailto:grants@chescofc.org) with questions.

