

I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date 6/20/2023

Contact Information

Organization Name: Peter's Place
Address: 336 King of Prussia Rd, Radnor, PA 19087
Phone: 610-687-5150
Website: www.petersplaceonline.org
Year Incorporated: 2000
FEIN: 23-3062819

ED/CEO Name: Stephanie Lim Capello
ED/CEO E-mail: stephanie@petersplaceonline.org
Board Chair Name: William G. Kiesling, Esq.
Board Chair Approval (check here): X
Primary Contact Name: Trish Corvo
Primary Contact E-mail:
trish@petersplaceonline.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities Environment/Animal Welfare Education
 Health Human Services Religion

Mission: The mission of Peter's Place is to provide safe and supportive environments for grieving children and families and to foster understanding of the effects of death and grief.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):
Greater Philadelphia (Burks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties).

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

Peter's Place serves grieving children, ages K-12, and the families and professionals who support them. Annually, we serve approximately 1,500 individuals.

Annual Budget \$ <u>936,250</u>	<u>7</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>77</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>22</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>14</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>135</u>	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>9</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>1,800+</u>	# of Volunteer Hours
<i>100 % total</i>		

Top 3-5 funding sources: Shanahan Family Foundation (\$75,000 over 3 years); Neighborhood League Shops (\$20,000); Scholler Foundation (\$10,000)

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building or General Operating ?

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

Mission, Vision & Strategy Governance & Leadership Partnerships & Collaborations
 Fundraising, Development & Marketing Technology Other: _____

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

Proposal Summary: Recent reports from the Pew Research Center highlight growing mental health challenges, particularly among children and youth, even as the pandemic wanes. Our community and nation are continuing to struggle with ongoing grief, feelings of loss, and emotional distress. Peter's Place has a significant role to play in reversing this disturbing trend. Our comprehensive bereavement support services attend to the emotional well-being of children and families by mitigating the risk factors for bereavement that lead to poor outcomes. The need and demand for our services has not let up. Despite growing our staff by 2.5 FTE in the last year, program staff are already working at capacity, forcing us to open wait lists for services. Your investment will ensure children and families most in need of our critical bereavement support services will get the care they need to thrive.

STATEMENT OF NEED Childhood bereavement is a critical public health issue and is tragically misunderstood. Because children grieve differently from adults, their responses are not always apparent to their parents, teachers, or even their support professionals. Children often grieve in isolation; some suffer devastating consequences from lack of appropriate support, including poor academic outcomes, behavioral problems, depression, suicide, and substance use disorder. Grieving children are considered “at-risk” due to their increased propensity towards these poor, long-term health and wellness outcomes.

The June 2023 Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model (CBEM), developed by Judi's House/JAG Institute, reported that in our service area (Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties), a total of 27,560 children under 18 were currently bereaving the death of a parent, and an additional 33,390 children are predicted to experience the death of a parent by age 18. As reported by USAFacts.org, as of 6/12/2023, our service area has experienced 13,965 unforeseen deaths since March 2020 because of COVID-19 (including 1,359 in Chester County). During the height of the pandemic, children lost parents, grandparents, family, and other significant people at an astonishing pace. Additionally, they experienced a disruption to their school community and the consistency of a school structure, missed out on special events and traditional milestones. All are continuing to navigate an uncertain future and the impact of a traumatic period fraught with loss. These secondary losses elicit a similar grief response to the loss of an important person and place children at risk for poor long-term outcomes when lacking appropriate support.

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND Peter's Place was originally designed after a nationally recognized program, and has since combined awareness of local community needs, professional experience, and extensive best practices research to produce a unique grieving center that is not replicated anywhere. Our vision is to create a culture where grief is better understood and supported. We provide both direct care and education to advance this vision (free of charge to our families), bringing grief to the forefront of public discourse. Since our 2001 opening, Peter's Place has provided direct support to over 15,000 grieving children and adult caregivers and indirect support to tens of thousands in the five-county Philadelphia area, particularly in under-resourced communities where children and families might otherwise lack essential grief support. Our programming mitigates risk and creates a path towards healing and wellness.

FUNDING REQUEST Peter's Place is eager to partner with Chester County Community Foundation as we strive to meet growing need and demand for our comprehensive bereavement services. Your general operating investment will support the following services, offered free of charge in the five-county Philadelphia area:

Onsite Groups: Peer support groups for children ages 4-17 help guide a supported grief process. Parent and caretaker groups run alongside each of our children's groups to support family well-being. “Ryan's Hope”, a specialized group for parents who have lost a child to substance abuse is also offered, and we are currently preparing to expand group support to children with autism spectrum disorder. In FY2022, we served 302 individuals through onsite groups.

School Based Services: Comprehensive grief support and education is provided to partnering schools, including student groups, postvention services upon the death of a student or teacher, and comprehensive professional development services to guide school personnel as they work towards meeting the emotional needs of their entire school community. This service area skyrocketed as the effects of the pandemic took their toll. In FY2021, we trained a total of 648 professionals to effectively support bereaved children, compared to 256 professionals in FY2020. We are currently pursuing our

certification as an approved provider of continuing education credits for school personnel to deepen this service offering. In FY2022, we served 1,021 individuals, including 19 postventions and 49 student groups.

Community Services: To support the development of a resilient community, Peter's Place provides specialized adult grief support services and partners with local organizations to provide professional development services, education, and youth programming. Adult virtual groups include such topics as spousal loss, COVID death, and parent loss; professional development is offered to social workers, mental health and healthcare professionals and students; and youth programming is provided in partnership with such programs as Philadelphia Outward Bound School. In FY2022, approximately 421 individuals were served through community services.

POPULATION SERVED While anyone can attend Peter's Place, the families we serve are usually struggling financially, sometimes resulting from the death, which can be economically as well as emotionally traumatic. In FY2022 we held 26 on-site groups at our Delaware County facility (all free of charge to our families), serving 179 children and 136 adults coming from Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties. Nearly a quarter of participants identified as BIPOC, and one-third reported an annual income of \$50,000 or less, well below Chester County's median household income of \$109,969 (US Census). We served 324 children through 49 school groups across 42 different schools in the five-county Philadelphia area. Most students (66%) identify as BIPOC. We provided 19 postventions, serving 157 people, in schools that experienced the death of a teacher or student, and facilitated 9 professional development events, serving 268 school personnel. A total of 1,021 individuals were served through our offsite programming, including 425 children. For many of these students, the care we provide at their school is their only opportunity to process their feelings.

Year after year, Peter's Place has had a consistent uptick in numbers served. When the pandemic hit in March 2020, we were forced to suspend our in-person school groups. We quickly adjusted our programming to provide quality services using a remote platform and concentrated resources on professional development services for school personnel. As the strain of the pandemic took its toll, our professional development services prepared school personnel to adequately care for their school community. During the 2021-2022 school year, we re-built our school groups as the pandemic began its retreat, finishing the year having provided 25% more school groups, and serving 25% more students, than we did prior to the pandemic.

While our capacity has been strained to keep up with demand, particularly demand from schools and school districts, we recognize that our services must continue to evolve to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population, with more complex struggles, in a post-pandemic world where social and economic uncertainty is heightened. To meet these challenges, we engaged in, and recently completed, a strategic planning process that incorporates Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and began a year-long process with Judi's House/JAG Institute, as part of their Childhood Bereavement Changemaker initiative. Through a competitive application process, Peter's Place was selected to participate in one of three cohorts to grow our capacity for data collection and program evaluation. Taken together, this work will provide a guided path towards sustainable, data-informed programming that will best meet the needs of our diverse community.

EVALUATING OUR IMPACT Peter's Place is committed to being a trusted source of community care – our primary goal is to ensure that no child ever grieves alone. Children and youth often feel socially isolated and disconnected from family, peers, and their community, when those connections are exactly what they need to heal.

Your support will help us meet the following objectives in pursuit of our goal:

1. Serve 1,250 individuals through onsite and offsite programming.
2. Expand professional development services to support and guide the professionals who care for youth.
3. Provide community education on the effects of death and grief and the many forms of grief, and in doing so, broaden community awareness of Peter's Place so that families, schools, and professionals alike are aware of the services we provide free of charge.
4. Accomplish these service offerings free of charge to our families and partners while maintaining financial sustainability.

Our evaluation measures reflect research findings of the positive effects of group intervention – the majority of our children self-report improvement against risk factors for bereavement that lead to poor outcomes, including reduced self-esteem, fear, loneliness, academic problems, and difficulty talking about grief.

We are encouraged by these outcomes and the ability of our services to advance a healthy grief process, particularly considering the mental health impact of the pandemic and rising rates of mental health issues generally, especially among children, adolescents, and young adults. In March 2023, the Pew Research Center reported that 44% of high school students said they felt sad or hopeless most every day; the CDC reports that 22% of high school students indicated they had seriously considered suicide in 2021, up from 16% in 2011. Peter's Place has a significant role to play in reversing this disturbing trend by attending to the emotional health and wellness of children and families across the five county Philadelphia area. Led by a team of professional clinicians and subject matter experts, our peer support groups, professional development, and grief education services can mitigate the potential long-term and devastating consequences of grief and lead children and families to improved overall well-being.

CONCLUSION As the pandemic evolves to endemic, reports from schools, health centers, and national research groups indicate that children and adolescents are continuing to struggle from the cumulative losses brought on by the pandemic. As a result, need and demand for our services has not let up. During the 2021-2022 school year, we provided 25% more school groups, and served 25% more students, than we did pre-COVID. Despite growing our staff by 2.5 FTE over the last 18 months and launching an internship program for graduate level clinical students, we've been forced to open a waitlist for both our onsite and school groups, making your support critical. As we lean on our current philanthropic partners to help sustain our services, we are also ambitiously pursuing strategic initiatives to expand our capacity, including establishing an endowment fund and developing a revenue stream through our well-regarded professional development series. Your \$7,500 investment is critical as we pursue these capacity building initiatives to meet the needs of our community. Together, we can build a resilient community where children and families can thrive.

ATTACHMENTS

- 501c3 letter
- Board of Directors
- Annual Report
- Audit
- FY2022 Actual vs. Budget report
- FY2023 Operating budget vs. YTD Actuals
- Strategic Plan