

## The Amelia Center

*A place of hope for grieving children, parents and families*



CHILDREN'S  
HEALTH SYSTEM®  
Children are the center of our lives.

## Description of Services

The Amelia Center was founded on the belief that every child, teen and adult deserves the opportunity to grieve in a supportive and understanding environment. We believe that grief is a natural and normal reaction to the loss of a loved one. Though the duration and intensity of grief is unique for each individual, we believe each person has the natural ability to heal one's self.

## Scope of Services

We provide grief support for children and teenagers anticipating or grieving the death of a parent, grandparent, sibling, close relative or friend, as well as support for parents or grandparents grieving the death of a child or grandchild. Individuals with presenting problems outside our scope of services will be given a referral to an appropriate social service or counseling center.

## Attendance and Cancellations

We request at least 24 hours notice to cancel an appointment, but please **call and cancel your appointment at any point when you know you will not be able to come**. Also, counseling appointments are scheduled for one hour intervals. So, please be aware that **those arriving late may not be able to be seen by their counselor** on that day and may have to reschedule for a later day and time. Individuals and families who **miss an appointment without canceling more than twice will not be rescheduled** without the counselor's consent.

## Finances

Children's Hospital is a non-profit agency. As a department of Children's Hospital, The Amelia Center depends on the financial contributions of clients and community members to provide individual and group counseling at no set fee. Any donation you can make is greatly appreciated. Donations can be given at the front desk, be made online at [www.AmeliaCenter.org](http://www.AmeliaCenter.org), or mailed to The Amelia Center 1513 4<sup>th</sup> Ave South, Birmingham, AL 35233.

If requested, The Amelia Center will gladly recognize your memorial or honorarium in our **Tears to Hope** Newsletter. For more information on making a tax-deductible donation, please ask the receptionist or your counselor.

## Confidentiality and Privacy

The Amelia Center staff is required to keep your communication with us confidential. If you wish to have information about your counseling released to a third party, you will need to sign a "Waiver of Confidentiality." Please take a moment to read the attached "**Exceptions to Confidentiality**" sheet to better understand circumstances when confidentiality may have to be broken.

## Supervision of Children and Teens

Children and teens under the age of 16 must be with an adult at all times inside and outside The Amelia Center. Before and after individual and group session, the parent(s)/guardian(s) should supervise their own child or young teen, or bring another adult to help supervise the child/children if they themselves will be in a counseling session. You are responsible for your child's/children's behavior in the waiting room. Unruly or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. Supervision is essential because of liability issues and medical emergencies.

## Food

Hungry children and teens have difficulties concentrating. For healthy grief work, please be sure that your child or teen has eaten before coming to a session. We also ask you to please **not** bring food or drink into our waiting area.

## Communicable Diseases

Grief negatively affects the immune system, so anyone who is grieving is more prone to sicknesses. The Amelia Center works to provide a safe and healthy environment for all our visitors. Towards this end, we request the following Sickness Policy be followed.

If you or your child is sick, **please cancel your appointment** and refrain from coming to the center until you or your child is well again.

More specifically, we request that anyone with the following symptoms do not come to The Amelia Center until they are resolved. Staff may be called upon to identify the following symptoms and to ask a visitor to leave or **immediately terminate** a counseling session.

Please cancel your appointment at The Amelia Center if you or your child, or anyone you bring to the center exhibits the following:

- **Fever:** any temperature above normal. Individuals may return when fever-free for 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducer.
- **Vomiting:** Individuals may return if there has been no vomiting for 24 hours
- **Diarrhea**
- **Sore throat or difficulty swallowing**
- **Unusual nasal discharge**
- **Significant tiredness, irritability**
- **Uncontrolled coughing**
- **Difficulty breathing, wheezing**
- **Rash or spots on skin, ringworm infection**
- **Severe itching**
- **Mouth sores**
- **Eye discharge**
- **Other illnesses: Lice, flu, chickenpox, pinkeye**

*Please consider that while one person may recover quickly from an illness, the same illness can affect another more severely.*

*There also could be a very serious threat to other family members or to visitors, for example to a pregnant mother or to a person receiving chemotherapy treatment.*

## **Types of Programs**

Individual & Family Counseling: Individual and family counseling is available at no set fee to children, teenagers and adults in accordance with our scope of services. An intake session is provided to determine client goals. Follow-up sessions are then scheduled as needed and/or appropriate referrals are made.

Group Counseling: Group counseling is offered at no set fee for children, teenagers and adults in accordance with our scope of services. Group counseling is offered for children, teenagers and adults using a 4-8 week format. Other groups may be offered short term to meet the needs of clients, including: Traumatic Loss, Survivors of Suicide and other loss specific groups. The local chapter of Compassionate Friends meets twice each month to provide peer support for parents and families grieving the death of a child.

Critical Incident Stress Management: Critical Incident Stress Management is provided to schools. A team of counselors offers grief and crisis counseling on-site at no set cost for any organization within our five county service area. A fee will be charged to cover costs incurred to travel outside our service area.

Education, Training & Workshops: Education, training, workshops and consultations are made available to schools, businesses and community organizations for a fee to cover costs.

### **EXCEPTIONS TO PRIVACY**

- 1. State law requires that our staff report to the appropriate authority any suspected physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and neglect.**
- 2. If we learn that someone with whom we are working with has a specific intent to bring harm to himself/herself, we reserve the right to inform other family members and/or make appropriate referrals if necessary.**
- 3. If we have reason to be concerned about the drug and/or alcohol use or abuse by a child or teen, we reserve the right to inform the parent or guardian.**
- 4. If the court, including a subpoena, orders information, we will attempt to contact you about the order. If you oppose the release, the court may nevertheless require compliance.**
- 5. If we learn that someone participating in the program might commit a violent act or a crime has been committed, we may take steps to protect the intended victim against such danger and/or inform the police.**
- 6. The rights and exceptions to privacy apply to information disclosed in support groups. All group members are encouraged to keep such information confidential, but The Amelia Center cannot guarantee they will do so.**
- 7. At times, The Amelia Center uses case examples of children, teens and their families in publishing journal articles, conducting professional training, and in fund raising efforts. We may anonymously refer to your situation in those circumstances. Your child, teen, or family's complete name will never be used without specific written approval.**