

LOSS Program

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

What is LOSS?

The LOSS (Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide) Program is a support group for those who are grieving a death by suicide of a family member or close friend. The LOSS Program is a non-denominational program offered by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago in collaboration with the Diocese of Joliet.

The program was founded in 1979 when there was an even greater stigma attached to suicide, one that sometimes prevented survivors from accessing the resources they needed during the grieving process.

Since then, not only has LOSS served thousands of individuals and families, but its activities have helped to raise awareness and in turn reduce the stigma associated with losing a loved one through suicide.

What does LOSS do?

LOSS offers a safe, non-judgmental place where group members are assisted throughout the grieving process. The support and understanding of the trained clinicians coupled with the knowledge and first-hand experience of veteran LOSS members help survivors to realize that they are not alone, that they are not losing their minds, and that they will not feel this deep intense sadness for the rest of their lives.

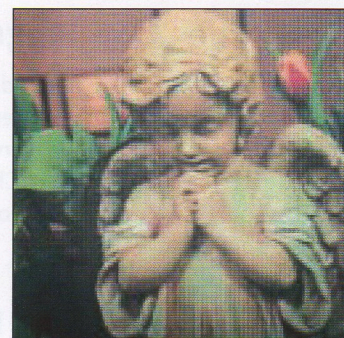
How does LOSS help?

- Provides a warm, nurturing network of other survivors
- Educates members about the grieving process
- Emphasizes that life will be joyful again; never the same, but worth living
- Offers hope and strength to survivors

What services are available?

- Ongoing monthly meetings for survivors at nine meeting sites throughout the Chicagoland area, Cook and Lake counties, and the Diocese of Joliet
- Weekly groups for the newly bereaved in 8-week sessions
- Individual and family counseling for adults and children (a new service added in 2010)
- Monthly newsletter, the Obelisk, is mailed to 3,500 people associated with the LOSS program
- Parent consultation

Find more information at www.catholiccharities.net/loss



Service Categories

- Adoption
- Child Development
- Counseling
- Domestic Violence
- Emergency Assistance
- Health Care
- Homelessness
- HIV/AIDS Awareness
- Immigration/Naturalization
- Legal
- Maternity/Pregnancy
- Nutrition
- Refugee Resettlement
- Senior Services
- Senior Housing
- Substance Abuse
- Veterans Services

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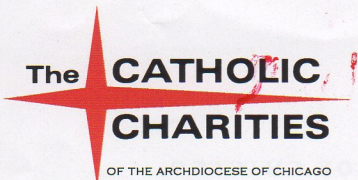
LOSS Program

721 N. LaSalle Street
Chicago, IL 60654
(312) 655-7284

Image: This photograph is taken from a square in a quilt created by members of the LOSS program in memory of their loved ones.

THE MISSION OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Catholic Charities fulfills the Church's role in the mission of charity to anyone in need by providing compassionate, competent and professional services that strengthen and support individuals, families and communities based on the value and dignity of human life. In order to remain faithful to our mission, Catholic Charities is guided by these core values: Respect, Compassion, Competence and Stewardship.



LOSS Program for Children and Youth

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

About the LOSS Program for Children and Youth

The LOSS Children's Program addresses the needs of children and adolescents impacted by the suicide of a family member or person close to them. The Children's Program is a free and non-denominational service, serving Cook and Lake counties, offered by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago. We are funded by the Illinois Children's Health Care Foundation, other foundations concerned with the welfare of children, as well as your private donations.

What does the LOSS Program for Children and Youth do?

By listening to children's feelings about the loss of their loved one, we can help to improve children's emotional and behavioral functioning after the trauma of a loved one's suicide. Children are encouraged to express their feelings through art and dance therapy, helping the child make sense of the loss and moving them through the grief process in a developmentally appropriate way that minimizes unhealthy expressions of grief. By working together with parents and caregivers, family connections are strengthened and trauma resolution can take place.

What we know about the impact of suicide on children

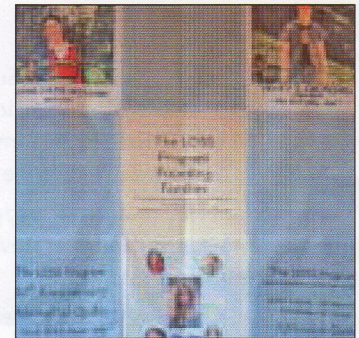
Studies show that bereaved parents may not recognize the full scale of their children's distress due to their own grief. Children may inhibit their grief reactions in order to avoid increasing their parent's sadness or anxiety. Children and adolescents need support in handling their interactions with peers after the suicide loss. Traumatic reactions can interfere with normal grieving processes and present emotional and behavioral risks.

How does the LOSS Program for Children and Youth help?

- We provide a helping environment that is safe and nurturing and assist with trauma resolution.
- We help to normalize the intense feelings of grief while correcting misconceptions a child may have formed about the suicide.
- We assist with coping skills and a realistic understanding of the grief process.
- We help parents model a healthy grief process and understanding of their child's needs.

"My daughter doesn't have that always sad look she used to have. I can see that her free spirit is back. She seems to be enjoying her life so much more now, and we don't fight the way we used to. I just wanted to thank you because we have been able to turn the corner."

- MOTHER WHOSE TEENAGER MOVED FORWARD AFTER HER FATHER'S SUICIDE WITH HELP FROM THE LOSS PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH



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