A Message from our Executive Director

We are so very, very grateful for all the support you provide for The Austin Center for Grief & Loss. We could not provide the mental health support services we provide without our donors, dedicated team of clinicians, board members, and of course, our wonderful volunteers! We are honored to offer therapy, support groups organized by type of loss, and school-based support groups in Title I schools. We are still offering our services virtually due to the ongoing pandemic and ever-evolving variants. We are hopeful that in 2022, we will be able to start offering services again in person. But, we, like everyone else, will remain flexible and pivot to meet the conditions as they continue to develop. We know that the toll on people’s mental health has been staggering, and our services are needed more today than ever before. That is why we are so grateful and humbled to continue to serve as a vital resource for our Central Texas neighbors.

I want to also take this opportunity to personally welcome our new Clinical Director, Dr. Pamela Malone, Ph.D., LCSW-S. Dr. Malone is a renowned expert in the field of grief and loss and is a Fellow in Thanatology, with more than 30 years of clinical experience. The entire Austin Grief Team is extremely excited and humbled that Dr. Malone will bring her leadership, wealth of knowledge, and compassionate presence to lead Austin Grief into a new era as we continue our mission. During the coming months, we very much look forward to introducing Dr. Malone to the broader Austin Grief community.

Finally, I would like to thank our Interim Clinical Director, Jeanene Smith, MA, LPC-S, LMFT-S, for serving as Interim Clinical Director over the past 8 months. The entire Austin Grief team extends its deep appreciation and gratitude to Jeanene. She has provided excellent supervision, training, support, and service during this time, providing a solid foundation for a smooth transition. We are grateful for her continued commitment and service as a valued Board Member.

In Gratitude,
Kim Nugent-Anderson
UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2nd & 3rd is Amplify Austin's 24 hours of giving!

Your donation is being matched, making every dollar double!
The Anderson Charitable Foundation will match up to $15,000!

Early Giving is happening now!

Your Amplify Austin Donations Matched!

COMMUNITY IMPACT

City of Austin First Responders Mental Health
The Austin Center for Grief & Loss is proud to be a provider for the City of Austin First Responders Mental Health program.

NACG National Alliance for Children's Grief
Rachel Saffer, LCSW-S was a member of the workgroup that created a Grief Talk in School Resources Guide, Supporting a Friend Who is Grieving.

City of Austin Corporate Engagement Council
Kim Nugent-Anderson was invited to present as a featured speaker to the City of Austin Corporate Engagement Council on the topic of mental health issues and the direct impact Austin Grief services are having in the Austin Community.

New York Times Interview
Austin Grief Therapist, Laura Babineau, LPC, was interviewed by the New York Times on the topic of prolonged grief caused by the pandemic.

Community Grief Trainings
Ariana Valadez, ACGL staff member, provided a psychoeducational presentation to Austin Oaks Church hosted by Casa Firme
regarding how to provide support to their congregants, experiencing so much loss during the pandemic. Austin Grief appreciated the opportunity to provide this presentation in Spanish to the community.

Jeanene Smith, MA, LPC-S, LMFT-S, provided a processing group and psychoeducation talk to Austin Heart Hospital employees, offering a space to process grief.

Lynne Levinson MEd, LPC-S, Austin Grief Therapist, provided training to the Austin Police Department crisis intervention social work interns.

Rachel Saffer, LCSW-S, provided psychoeducational training to staff at Foundation Communities, a nonprofit that supports previously unhoused and vulnerable populations, about processing their own grief and recognizing and preventing burnout and compassion fatigue when significant loss and death is a part of their job during the pandemic.

Rachel Saffer, LCSW-S, participated on a panel discussion offered by the Austin Child Guidance Center on the topic of children and grief.

Kim Nugent-Anderson presented to the Austin Junior Forum about Austin Grief and volunteer and community opportunities.

YOUR AUSTIN GRIEF COMMUNITY

A Message from our Interim Clinical Director Jeanene Smith, MA, LPC-S, LMFT-S

I am not very good with goodbyes and this one is especially hard to write. I have so enjoyed serving as the Clinical Director for Austin Grief. It was truly a pleasure to meet all the staff and help the mission of the Center move forward. This is a special place that was created with love to help those who are suffering. No matter what changes Austin Grief undergoes this still underwrites everything we do. I know the transition to Pam Malone will be smooth and each member will enjoy the knowledge and personal touch she will bring. I am happy to still be around working with the Board as we take the next steps for Austin Grief.
A Message from our Incoming Clinical Director

Pamela A. Malone, Ph.D., LCSW-S

I am very excited to become a member of The Austin Center for Grief & Loss community and look forward to making my professional pivot from the academic world to the Clinical Director position. I will bring my course development, teaching, and training experience to the position. Having always maintained a private practice and provided clinical supervision, I will bring my knowledge and experience in these areas to the position. I honor the differences that we each bring to the work environment in terms of our backgrounds, belief systems, values, ethics, and education that can result in exciting and growth-producing dialogue. In creating an environment that includes openness, mutual respect, discovery, and collaboration, I bring my years of experience, some creative concepts, and a natural curiosity about the area of grief, loss, and bereavement. In enhancing this environment, you bring your experiences, strengths, and interests. I believe together we can continue to increase the transformative power of loss in our work with the children, adolescents, adults, families, and communities that seek our support as they experience the multifaceted adaptive response that we know of as grief. I look forward to getting to know each of you in the days and weeks ahead.

Warm regards,

Dr. Pamela Malone, Ph.D., LCSW-S

Children's Programs

Austin Grief is experiencing an exponential increase in demand for school-based groups. These groups are offered in Title I schools, whose students typically face barriers to receiving mental health support services. When we began our partnership with Communities in Schools (CIS) in the fall of 2018, we started with 2 schools in Austin ISD. At the start of 2021, Austin Grief provided school groups to 5 school districts. Now at the start of 2022, we are impacting more children than ever before by
providing over 20 school groups in 6 school districts (AISD, Hays Consolidated ISD, Bastrop ISD, Manor ISD, Lockhart ISD, San Marcos ISD). We are in the process of creating direct partnerships with 2 additional school districts including Pflugerville ISD and Liberty Hill ISD, which would bring the number of school districts served up to 8.

Last month, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry declared that the pandemic-related decline in child mental health has become a national emergency. On top of social isolation and family instability, the medical groups said, “more than 140,000 children in the United States lost a primary and/or secondary caregiver, with youth of color disproportionately impacted.” Austin Grief is working hard to meet the needs of Central Texas children.

Austin Grief is especially looking forward to offering Camp Red Bird this summer. Camp Red Bird is a bereavement summer day camp for children ages 6-12 that have experienced the death of a parent, sibling, or primary caregiver. If you know a child that could benefit from Camp Red Bird, reach out to Rachel at rsaaffer@austingrief.org. If you know a corporate sponsor that would like to support Camp Red Bird, please reach out to Kim, knugentanderson@austingrief.org.

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**Peer Support Groups**

Austin Grief Peer Support Groups are ongoing and meet online 2 times per month. Each group is facilitated by 2 highly-trained and experienced volunteers, supervised by a licensed clinician. We strive to keep our groups small to foster safety and offer time to attend to each member. Our peer support groups are donation-based. Austin Grief is currently offering the following peer support groups; Bereaved Parents, Bereaved Spouses & Partners, Beyond Divorce, Adult Parent Loss, Beyond Suicide, Women’s Mother Loss, and Elementary Aged Children’s Group.

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**Individual Counseling Services**

The Austin Center for Grief & Loss offers individual, couples, and family therapy for both adults and children. Our therapists have training specific to trauma, grief and loss in children and adults. The need for mental health services is greater than it has been in all our 15 years of operation. We are serving 150% more people today than we did prior to the pandemic. We strive to help anyone in need of hope and healing, regardless of one’s ability to pay. We offer a sliding fee structure for those in need and a care assistance subsidy.

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**Volunteer Program**
Austin Grief Volunteers continue to step up to promote our mission of offering hope, healing, and transformation to the Austin community. Our Volunteer Facilitator Training enables our facilitators to have the skills and tools necessary to hold a safe space for our group members to grieve. We would love to welcome you as one of our volunteers. Volunteer opportunities include support group facilitation, hospitality & special projects, events, fundraising, and gardening. Our Spring 2022 cohort is beginning in March and we are still accepting volunteer inquiries! Our volunteers are truly a cornerstone of the Austin Grief community! For more information on volunteering, please visit the Get Involved section of our website or contact Ariana M. Valadez at avaladez@austingrief.org.

Volunteer Spotlight

Amelia’s dedication to our mission is easy to see. We would like to highlight her volunteer story.

“I have had personal experiences with grief and loss that have felt manageable because of the support I had during those experiences. This is one of the reasons I wanted to get involved with Austin Grief. I love that there is an organization that is dedicated to providing support for those experiencing grief and loss. I’ve learned through the Volunteer Facilitator Training and hearing people’s stories that grief is an expression of love for a loved one who has passed. I have felt that everyone is so warm and welcoming, and my hope is that everyone facing grief and loss has the opportunity to find a safe space to feel all of their feelings about what they’re going through. When grief is experienced with support and in community, it can provide you the opportunity to experience life in a deeper, more genuine way.”

HOLDERS OF HOPE GIVING CIRCLE

Please consider becoming a member of our Giving Circle, by contributing a gift of $10, $25, $50, or $100 per month.

Receiving help after experiencing a trauma can change the trajectory of a person’s life. When children receive support in their grief process, it helps the entire family cope and heal together. Please help us sustain this important work and our
You can easily support Austin Grief when you shop on Amazon with AmazonSmile. Designate The Austin Center for Grief & Loss as your charity of choice with one click and donate while you shop. Easily select Austin Grief on your computer and phone. Doing good while shopping, that's a reason to smile.

Support Austin Grief

Donate, without your support, we could not continue to change lives providing hope, healing and transformation. To make a donation visit our website or click the link below.

Holder of Hope Giving Circle, by contributing a gift of $10, $25, $50, or $100 per month, you will become a Holder of Hope Giving Circle member and will help sustain the much-needed work of providing hope, healing, and transformation.

Sponsor Holders of Hope 2021. For more information visit our website, Holders of Hope or email Kim at knugentanderson@austingrief.org.

Referrals, individuals can schedule an intake appointment by phone at: 512.472.7878 or online anytime. For consultations or trainings in the community please call 512.472.7878.

Shop and give at the same time! When you shop using Amazon
Smile, Freytag's Austin Community Bloom's program and even using your Randall's card!

Spread the word and let your community know why you support The Austin Center for Grief & Loss.

DONATE TODAY

www.AustinGrief.org
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512.472.7878