

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS AT DOUGY CENTER



Dougy Center has supported children and families after a death since 1982. In October, 2014 we added our Pathways program for families who have a family member living with an advanced serious illness. We are a non-profit organization, and thanks to the financial support of our community, our support groups are offered at no cost.

What is a grief support group and how do I join one at Dougy Center?

We offer support groups for children, teens, and their caregivers, as well as for young adults who have a family member who has died, or who is living with an advanced serious illness. We're here to support you for however long you need it. If you are interested in having your child, teen, or someone you care about attend a group, here's what to do:

1. Call us. We'll gather some information from you and schedule you for an orientation, and/or provide additional resources. If you have computer access, get to know us online at dougy.org.

If you have a family member who has died, please call us at 503.775.5683 or email us at help@dougy.org to set up an orientation appointment. At the one-hour orientation, your family, along with several other families, will have the opportunity to take a tour of the building, watch a video, and learn more about our groups. This is a time for everyone to ask questions about The Dougy Center. The date and place will depend on which of our three locations—Southeast Portland, Canby, or Hillsboro—is best for your family. For our young adult groups (ages 18-25, and 26 up), you don't need to attend an orientation, but please call or email for meeting time and location information.

If you have a family member who has an advanced serious illness: Give us a call at 503.775.5683 and our Pathways program Coordinator will talk with you about the program.

These groups are held at our Southeast Portland location.

2. Talk together and make a decision.

After talking with our program staff or attending the orientation, we ask that you discuss with your children or teens whether they would like to participate in a Dougy Center group. There is no obligation to join a group after attending an orientation. You and your children or teens will decide if it is the right fit for you. We've found that children and teens benefit most from Dougy Center when they choose to be here. If your family members decide not to attend Dougy Center after your orientation, we are happy to talk with you about other resources that may be helpful.

We can point you to Dougy Center guidebooks, activity books, and other reading or viewing materials. We also maintain a referral list of qualified counselors, therapists, support groups, and organizations.



3. If your child or teen decides to join a bereavement support group, you'll fill out our simple questionnaire and a Family Services Coordinator will contact you about placement.

Soon after we receive your questionnaire (provided by our staff at the orientation), the Family Services Coordinator will contact you to discuss which group will best suit your family's needs and schedule.

If there is a current opening in a group that fits your specific needs, we'll place your family in that group right away. We will let you know when the group meets next and send you a welcome packet with additional information, including a calendar of group meeting dates.

If there is not an opening right away in a best-fit Dougy Center group, we'll make a note of your preferences and contact you as soon as a spot opens up. In the meantime, we'll keep you updated on the status of group openings. We will also check in to see if other resources or referrals would be helpful while you are waiting. We do everything we can to place families in groups as soon as possible, and we're very grateful for the patience and understanding of our families.

For the Pathways program, our Pathways Program Coordinator will discuss your needs with you in a phone interview.

Get in Touch

Our goal is to make your time at Dougy Center as welcoming and comfortable as possible. If there is anything you need at any time, please let us know. Once you have joined a group, you are welcome to contact your group coordinator, a Family Services Coordinator, or the Pathways Program Coordinator with any questions or concerns.

After a family member has died, contact one of our Family Services Coordinators:

Sat Kaur Khalsa, MSW, familyservices@dougy.org, 503.775.5683

After a family member has received an advanced serious illness diagnosis, contact our Pathways Program Coordinator:

Rebecca Hobbs-Lawrence, MA
rebecca@dougy.org, 503.542.4832

For all young adult groups, contact:

Jana DeCristofaro, LCSW
jana@dougy.org, 503.542.4824



The National Grief Center
for Children & Families

Dougy Center Bookstore/Resources

Dougy Center's practical, easy-to-use materials are based on what they have learned from more than 65,000 Dougy Center participants. To order online, visit dougy.org or dougybookstore.org, or call 503.775.5683.

About Dougy Center

Founded in 1982, Dougy Center provides grief support in a safe place where children, teens, young adults, and their families can share their experiences before and after a death. Dougy Center provides support and training locally, nationally, and internationally to individuals and organizations seeking to assist children in grief.

©2025