



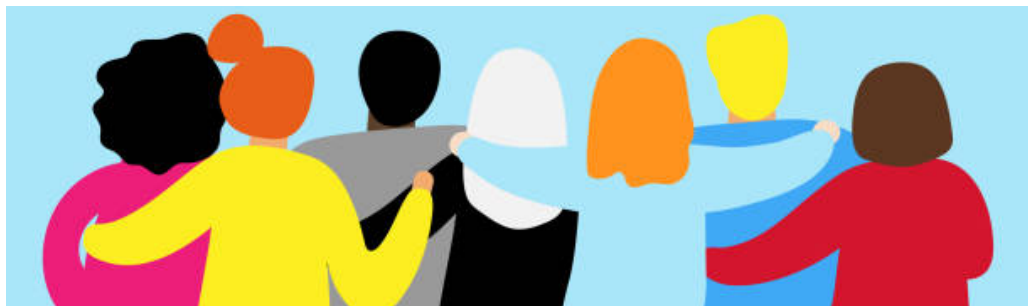
Grief Healing Support Centre

Bereaved Families of Ontario York Region

*"Where Hope & Healing Begins
And Loving Memories Keep Us Connected Forever!"*



Winter 2023 Newsletter



INTRODUCING OUR NEW OPERATIONAL NAME:

We are thrilled to share some exciting news with you today! After much consideration and feedback from our members and community partners, our Board of Directors are delighted to announce the adoption of our new *operational name*:

"Grief Healing Support Centre"

So what does this mean?

Our non-profit '*Business Name*' continues to be "Bereaved Families of Ontario-York Region" through CRA. With this, we will also be known as the "Grief Healing Support Centre" also registered through CRA as our '*Operating Name*'.

This added name better reflects the comprehensive services and support we provide to individuals, families and community groups navigating the challenging journey of grief.

As the "Grief Healing Support Centre", we remain dedicated to our mission of offering compassionate care, guidance, and resources to those who have experienced the loss of a loved one. Our commitment to helping individuals find healing, comfort, and hope during their grieving process remains unwavering.

This name addition marks an important milestone for our organization as we continue to evolve and adapt to the ever-changing needs of our community. The "Grief Healing Support Centre" name captures the essence of our mission and services, emphasizing our focus on providing a safe and nurturing environment for individuals to heal and grow.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our members, supporters, and volunteers for their unwavering support over the years. Your dedication and commitment have supported the expansion of services and touch the lives of countless individuals and families in need.

Thank you for being a part of our journey.

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

Groups (Upcoming Dates,
Registration Process &
Testimonials)

Recognizing Our Volunteers
& Accepting New Volunteers

Message from Our Executive
Director

Meet the Team

Ways to Remember Your
Loved One

How Can You Help?

Coping with Grief During the
Holiday

Thanking Our Funders &
2023 Accomplishments

Want Us to Come To Your
Organization for Workshop?

Complete an Intake by
Phone or Online

Message from the Team,
Office Closure

Contact Us
& Additional Resources

UPCOMING GROUPS SESSIONS DATES

OPEN GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP:

- Every Wednesday from February 7th, 2024 to March 27th, 2024
 - At 12:00pm - 1:30pm Online via Zoom

OPEN LOSS BY SUICIDE GROUP:

- Every Thursday from February 8th, 2024 to March 28th, 2024
 - At 12:00pm - 1:30pm Online via Zoom

OPEN PARENTAL/CAREGIVER LOSS GROUP:

- Every Thursday from April 11th, 2024 to May 30th, 2024
 - At 12:00pm - 1:30pm Online via Zoom

OPEN CHILD LOSS GROUP:

- Every Thursday from June 13th, 2024 to August 1st, 2024
 - At 12:00pm - 1:30pm Online via Zoom

OPEN SPOUSAL/LIFE PARTNER LOSS GROUP:

- Every Thursday from August 15th, 2024 to October 3rd, 2024
 - At 12:00pm - 1:30pm Online via Zoom

OPEN LOSS BY POISONING / OVERDOSE GROUP:

- Every Thursday from October 17th, 2024 to December 5th, 2024
 - At 12:00pm - 1:30pm Online via Zoom

FUTURE - OPEN GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS:

- Every Wednesday from April 10th, 2024 to May 29th, 2024
 - At 12:00pm - 1:30pm Online via Zoom
- Every Wednesday from June 12th, 2024 to July 31st, 2024
 - At 12:00pm - 1:30pm Online via Zoom

Please Note:

- Registration opens weekly on each Friday at 10:00am.
- Please be advised in order to register for any Peer Support Groups, an intake form and 1:1 session with a Grief Healing Support Centre Facilitator must be completed.
 - Please visit www.bfoyr.com/intakeform or call [905-898-6265](tel:905-898-6265) to get started.
- A reminder that all participants must register for each weekly session - completing the registration for one week does not guarantee a spot for the following week.
- There is a 10 minute grace period after the group has started - at that time, participants will no longer be admitted to that week's group in effort to reduce disruption for other participants who have already begun sharing in the weekly discussion.



WHAT IS THE OPEN GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP?

Throughout the 8-week program, we will explore a wide range of topics related to the grieving process. Each week, we will focus on a different theme, providing valuable insights and strategies to help you navigate your grief. Our experienced Facilitators will guide the discussions, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to be heard and supported. Our goal is to offer a supportive community where individuals can come together and share their experiences, emotions, and stories without fear of judgment.

Our New Updated Registration Process

To register for the Open Grief Support Group, simply visit our website at bfoyr.com and click on the "Group Sign Up" tab. From there, scroll down to find the date you would like to register for. Please note that registrations open every Friday at 10 am, providing everyone with an equal opportunity to secure their spot.

We kindly require that all participants complete at least one one-on-one session with a member of our team before joining the support group. This requirement ensures that individuals have received personalized support and are prepared to engage in the group setting effectively. Our team is available to assist you with any questions or concerns you may have regarding the registration process or any other aspect of our services. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us.



Testimonials from Participants:

"This was my first time to have joined a group where I could talk freely about what has gone on in my life with my losses. It was the feeling of knowing that I would not be judged for things I said I could let my tears come out. It was the feeling of not being alone. I would tell anyone who has lost a loved one to come out and join the group I have found it so helpful, and the facilitators are excellent."

"It was a fantastic hour and I can't wait to work on some of the suggestions and thoughts I left with from today. Thank you all so much for making a difference!"

"Thank you for these heartwarming sessions. It helped a lot with my healing."



RECOGNIZING OUR VOLUNTEERS

We wanted to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude for your unwavering dedication to the Grief Healing Support Centre. Your selfless commitment to our peer support group sessions, workshops, and bingo events has been nothing short of extraordinary. Through your efforts, you provide comfort, understanding, and a sense of community to those who are navigating the challenging journey of grief. Your compassion and empathy shine through in every interaction, creating a safe and nurturing space for our participants to heal. Your willingness to give of yourselves and share your time and talents is a true testament to the incredible impact that volunteers like you can make in the lives of others. We are continually inspired by your generosity and the positive influence you bring to our community. Your contributions do not go unnoticed, and we are immensely grateful for the warmth and kindness you bring to our Centre. Thank you once again for being the heart and soul of our organization. Your support is invaluable, and we look forward to continuing this journey together.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

MARY G.

“Being a volunteer in different capacities (e.g., patient advocate, mental health support) since early on has followed my experiential, educational and professional journey like parallel streams. It taught me to be non-judgmental and inclusive. Mostly, I learned that being emotionally vulnerable is universal, but getting help and support can be elusive. I am honoured to volunteer in a Peer Support position with the Grief Healing Support Centre where we welcome people (in person and virtually) to come together in a safe space to share the loss of a loved person who could be a spouse, a parent, a child, a friend. Having experienced the passing of many beloved people and my cat fairly recently, the message I value highly is that our pain is unique, but that we are not alone in our journey – we have each other’s back!”

A Message from the Executive Director

A most genuine and mindful thank you to all of our dedicated Staff, Students & Volunteers who continue to help design, develop and deliver all of our grief healing supports; responding to the identified grief & bereavement support needs of York Region and surrounding areas. With the strong strategic direction from our dedicated Board of Directors, the support of our Community Partners and our Funders.....Together we really do make a difference!!! We keep the Candle of Hope & Healing visible... shining bright & lighting the way for every person grieving and desperately trying to cope. To those who are currently navigating the lonely, personal journey of loss of a loved one, we are here - please reach out to us at 905-898-6265. I am so honored to be a part of such an important cause and to be able to collaborate with such beautiful souls who are collectively dedicated to timely and compassionate grief healing peer support across our beautiful Region of York.

VOLUNTEER WITH US

Our organization provides vital support and resources to individuals who are navigating the grieving process after the loss of a loved one. We offer a variety of services, including one-one-one sessions, support groups, educational workshops, and other resources to help individuals find hope and healing in times of loss.

As a volunteer, you will be provided with training and ongoing support. You will have the opportunity to make a positive impact on people's lives and help them through one of the most challenging experiences they may face. You may assist with tasks such as organizing events, facilitating support groups, providing administrative support, bingo support or simply offering a listening ear to those who need it.

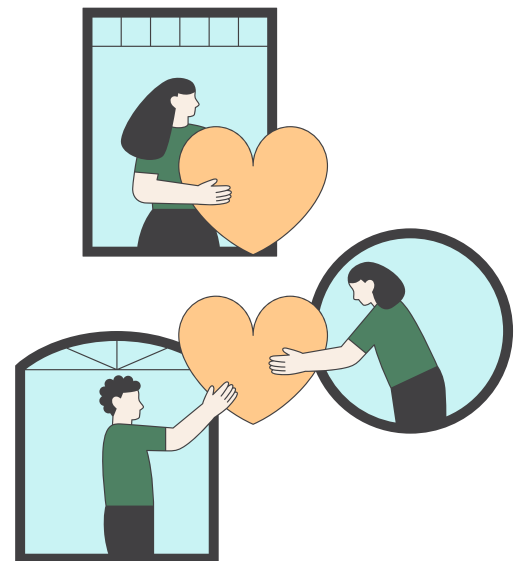
At the Grief Healing Support Centre, we value our volunteers and strive to provide a fulfilling experience that is both rewarding and beneficial to those we serve. We offer training and orientation to ensure that our volunteers are equipped to provide the best possible support to individuals and families in need.

Join us in making a difference in someone's life by volunteering with the Grief Healing Support Centre. Together, we can provide hope, healing, and support to those who are grieving.



Volunteer Benefits

- Enhance experience and skills: Volunteering can help individuals gain new skills and experiences, such as active listening, empathy, and communication skills.
- Enhancing mental health: Volunteering has been shown to have positive effects on mental health, including reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- Strengthening resumes: Volunteering can also enhance resumes and job applications, as it demonstrates a commitment to helping others and can showcase valuable skills and experiences.
- Volunteers will receive a certification of recognition after 1 year of service to the Grief Healing Support Centre.



Available Positions

- Administrative Assistant
- Group Facilitator
- Bingo Volunteer
- Events Coordinator
- Board of Directors
- Student Placements

Requirements

- 18 year old or higher
- Experience the grief of loved one
- Compassion, Non-Judgmental and Empathy
- Availability: Volunteers should be able to commit to a regular schedule and be dependable in their attendance.

How To Register

Fill out the volunteer registration form on our website at: bfoyr.com/volunteerwithus or email programs@bfoyr.com



MEET THE TEAM**BARBARA B.**Executive Director
ed@bfoyr.com

Having joined this organization in 2021, taking on the role of Executive Director, I bring years of experience in senior leadership roles across many services sectors including mental health, youth justice and developmental services utilizing experience and academic training in disciplines of psychology, social work, trauma counselling and crisis intervention/mediation. With dedication and commitment to a fully inclusive, safe space for every person in need of timely grief healing peer support services, I am so honored to work collaboratively with all members of the Grief Healing Support Team - Board, Staff, Volunteers, Funders and Community Partners.

MARIYA K.Finance and Admin
admin@bfoyr.com

Mariya is one of the newest members to the Grief Healing Support Team. We welcome and appreciate her years of experience in financial reporting, recording and her willingness to quickly jump in and learn the internal processes and requirements of our financials. For information on how you can donate in support of our grief healing programs, please reach out to Mariya at admin@bfoyr.com

PRATHIKA S.Intake and Outreach Coordinator
outreach@bfoyr.com

I am a passionate advocate for mental health and addiction recovery. I earned my Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Toronto, where my fascination with the human mind and behaviour took root. Building upon this foundation, I pursued a Post-Graduate Certificate in Addiction and Mental Health, further enhancing my skills in supporting individuals on their journey towards wellness. Beyond academia, I volunteered in an app production aimed at creating a comprehensive mental health resource platform, participated in research studies, offered peer support during group session and one-on-one counseling. These experiences have reinforced my commitment to making a positive impact.

LINDA G.Programs and Volunteer Manager
programs@bfoyr.com

Having started my early career as a Child & Youth Worker, with one of my first roles in Palliative Care at the Hospital for Sick Children supporting children and their families, is one that spoke deeply in directing my path in the Social Service Field. I have gained great fulfillment with over 25 years of diverse work experience including sales, corporate training, creating and launching an Education & Training Centre for a franchise company inclusive of being the founder of a Life & Wellness | Resilience Coaching business. As a lifelong learner what speaks to me most is my belief in the power of people & personal connection. I have a great sense of gratitude to have the opportunity to be part of such a supportive team of staff & committed volunteers!

JESSICA D.Marketing/Events, Program Support Coordinator
events@bfoyr.com

I am a Yoga Instructor with 700+ hours of formal teacher training; additional training in Ayurveda, Sound Healing, and Vipassana Meditation. I have the honour to work alongside superheros in Senior Care and Bereavement Services, with past training in Birth Doula and Palliative Care studies. I have been guiding yoga since 2016, with the absolute joy of teaching in studios, schools, hospitals, retirement homes, hospices, residential homes, corporate settings, and on yoga retreats. Bodhichitta, the Sanskrit word used to describe an awakened mind, motivated to work towards the liberation of all beings, is a daily motivation for me. Through movement, meditation, and music, health, happiness, and healing in community is possible.

NATALIE R.2023 Student
student@bfoyr.com

I started my journey at the University of Toronto, completing my bachelor's degree in Equity Studies, minoring in Sexual Diversity and Philosophy. I have a passion for helping others and realized that the career path I wanted to pursue was in social work. I am currently a full-time student enrolled in the Social Service Worker Program at George Brown College. I have been taught so much thus far, learning all the skills and resources needed in this field. I plan to continue my studies after and complete a bachelor's degree in social work. I am very fortunate to have been chosen to do my student placement with the Grief Healing Support Centre here in York Region. I have had a gratifying experience so far alongside a very supportive and kind staff team. The work that GHSC/BFOYR does is truly inspiring!

WAYS TO REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONE

“Save Our Butterflies” Kit

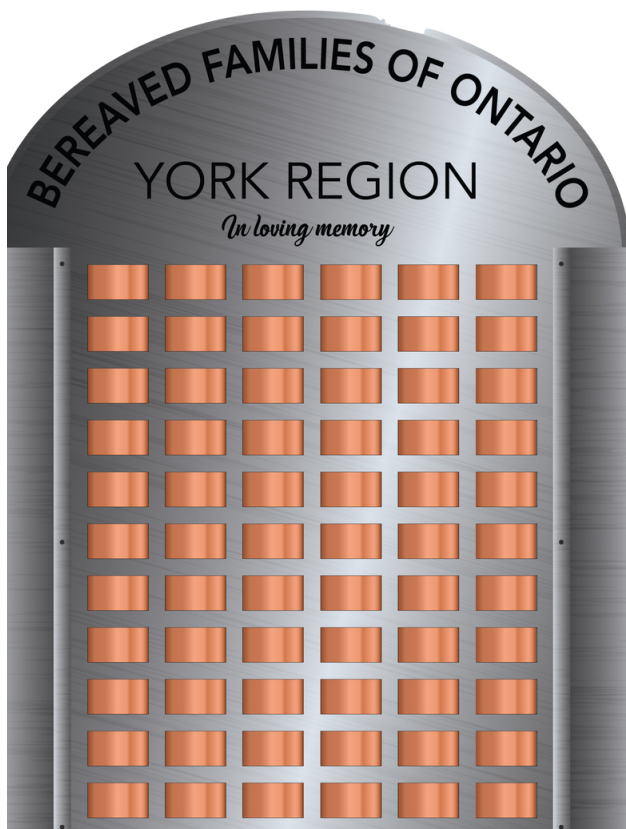
For many years, the monarch butterfly has been symbolic of love. This symbol supports our journey through grief after the loss of a loved one. Centered around hope, healing and giving back, this year's event continues to respond to the cry of the butterfly as it struggles to retain its strength and healing ability as it enters the now endangered species list! To respond to the call of the butterfly and spread the gift of hope and healing, consider purchasing a Save Our Butterflies Kit and join Grief Healing Support Centre's Community of Hope & Healing.

Each kit contains everything you need to start your own butterfly memorial garden. With each purchase, You help save our Butterflies & also help us keep all of our grief healing support programs FREE of charge!!

If you have purchased the butterfly kit, we would love to see it! Share some photographs of the progress to outreach@bfoyr.com

How To Order:

1. Visit www.bfoyr.com
2. Under "Event", Click on "Butterfly of Hope Campaign"
3. Scroll Down and Fill Out the Online Form
4. E-Transfer the Payment or Mail a Cheque



Memorial Plaque

Each plaque is made of solid stainless steel and is individually engraved for permanent placement on our Community Memorial of Remembrance located in the beautiful Fleury Park, Aurora Ontario.

The Grief Healing Support Centre (BFOYR) Community would like to acknowledge our **Volunteers: Vern and Brian** for their continued donation of time and care which they give to every plaque from date of order to date of display. Thanks to you both for your kindness and Support!

How To Order:

1. Visit www.bfoyr.com
2. Under "Event", Click on "Remembrance Memorial"
3. Scroll Down and Click On "Click Here for Plaque Order"
4. Fill Out the Information and Add to Cart
5. Proceed to Checkout

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Donate

Your donations play a vital role in enabling the Grief Healing Support Centre to continue offering free grief healing support to individuals in need. By contributing to our cause, you help provide a safe and nurturing environment where those experiencing grief can find solace, understanding, and guidance on their healing journey. Your generosity allows us to maintain a team of compassionate professionals, develop specialized programs and resources, and sustain the necessary infrastructure to ensure that our services remain accessible to all. Together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of those grappling with grief, offering them the support they need to navigate through their pain and find hope and healing.



Visit www.bfoyr.com to Find Different Ways to Donate

Sponsor

We are excited to extend an invitation to become a corporate sponsor for the Grief Healing Support Centre's workshops, support groups, and events. By partnering with us, you have the opportunity to make a meaningful impact in the lives of those who are grieving and in need of support. Your sponsorship will help us provide valuable resources, facilitate healing workshops, and create a supportive community for individuals navigating the journey of grief. Together, we can offer solace, guidance, and hope to those in need, making a significant difference in their lives during this difficult time.

Please Email admin@bfoyr.com For More Information

Coping with Grief During the Holiday

- 1. Acknowledge Your Feelings:** It's important to recognize and accept that you're grieving. Allow yourself to feel whatever emotions come up, whether it's sadness, anger, or even moments of happiness.
- 2. Create New Traditions or Modify Old Ones:** Consider starting new traditions that honor your loved one or adapting existing ones to accommodate your feelings. This could be lighting a candle in their memory, cooking their favorite dish, or even volunteering in their name.
- 3. Set Realistic Expectations:** Understand that this holiday season might be different from previous ones. Give yourself permission to take things one step at a time and let go of any pressure to conform to a particular standard of holiday cheer.
- 4. Communicate Your Needs:** Let your friends and family know what you're going through and how they can support you. They may not always know how best to help, so being open about your needs is crucial.
- 5. Take Care of Yourself:** Ensure you're eating well, getting enough rest, and engaging in activities that promote relaxation and self-care. This can include exercise, meditation, or spending time in nature.
- 6. Plan Ahead:** If certain events or gatherings might be particularly triggering for you, consider whether you want to attend and how you can navigate them in a way that feels comfortable for you.



THANKING OUR FUNDERS

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all our dedicated funders who have generously supported the Grief Healing Support Centre. Your unwavering commitment and financial contributions have enabled us to provide vital resources, workshops, and support groups to individuals who are grieving. Your belief in our mission and your willingness to invest in our programs have made a profound impact on the lives of those who are navigating the challenging path of grief. We are deeply grateful for your continued support, which allows us to offer solace, healing, and hope to individuals and families during their most vulnerable moments. Your generosity has made a lasting difference, and we extend our sincerest thanks for being an essential part of our journey.



2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We've facilitated **OVER 400+** one-on-one peer support sessions.

We've supported **OVER 300+** group members through **60** grief support group sessions at Grief Healing Support Centre.

We also collaborated with supporting community organizations to run numerous of grief support group session and our Navigating Our Grief Workshops.

- Amica Newmarket
- Municipality of York Region - Housing Division (various locations)
- Aspira Cedarvale Lodge Retirement Living
- 360 Kids, Richmond Hill
- Chippewas of Georgina First Nation
- Magna Community Centre

We supported the community with various education / awareness events throughout the year:

- Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation
- 16th Avenue Public School
- Seneca College King Campus
- Seneca College York Campus
- Newmarket High School

Please email programs@bfoyr.com if you would like us to come to your organization!

NAVIGATING OUR GRIEF WORKSHOP COLLABORATION

Our three hour grief healing workshop provides a safe space for healthy expression for thoughts and feelings following the loss of a loved one after a death as well as learning ways to support our friends, family, colleagues who are also grieving. We provide all materials for the 'art expression' component of our workshop which includes activities such as painting, creating/decorating bird houses, memory boxes, journaling, self-care activities, games, etc. All workshop are facilitated by our trained Grief Healing Facilitators. We also offer our grief education and awareness information table which provides an open 'meet and greet' style with more general discussion about healthy coping strategies and how to offer grief healing peer support to others.

For more information and to schedule a date for us to come to your school or community organization or workplace, please feel free to contact us at 905-898-6265 or email us at outreach@bfoyr.com. In advance, we look forward to connecting with you and would like to thank you for supporting hope and healing for every youth and adult across our beautiful York Region Community.



ALTERNATIVE INTAKE PROCESS

We are excited to announce an alternative intake process at the Grief Healing Support Centre, designed to break down barriers and make our services more accessible to individuals seeking support. Now, individuals can conveniently complete the intake form online at bfoyr.com/intakeform, eliminating the need for in-person visits or lengthy paperwork. Once the form is submitted, our dedicated team will promptly review it, and within two business days, individuals will receive a personalized call from our office to schedule their first one-on-one session. This streamlined approach not only saves time but also ensures a smoother and more efficient process for individuals in need of support. We are committed to removing obstacles and providing a welcoming environment for all those seeking healing and solace on their grief journey.

Grief Healing Support Centre
Bereaved Families of Ontario – York Region
Intake Form

First name *	Last name *
<input type="text" value="e.g. Jane"/>	<input type="text" value="e.g. Garcia"/>
Preferred Name	Preferred Pronoun
<input type="text" value="If you are known by a different name"/>	<input type="text" value="she/her, he/his, they/their"/>
Birthday *	
<input type="text" value=""/>	
Street Address *	City *
<input type="text" value=""/>	<input type="text" value=""/>
Region/State/Province *	Postal / Zip code *
<input type="text" value=""/>	<input type="text" value=""/>
Country *	
<input type="text" value=""/>	
Phone *	Email *
<input type="text" value="e.g., 555-555-5555"/>	<input type="text" value="e.g., email@example.com"/>
What Type of Support(s) Are You Looking For? *	
<input type="checkbox"/> One-on-one Peer Support Sessions Only <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Support Groups Only <input type="checkbox"/> Both One-on-one and Peer Support Groups	
How Did You Hear About Us? *	
<input type="text" value="Company Name, Website, Friend, Referral, etc."/>	
Name of Deceased *	
<input type="text" value="First Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Last Name"/>

MESSAGE FROM THE TEAM & OFFICE CLOSURE FOR HOLIDAY

As we approach the holiday season, we would like to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude for your ongoing support and trust in the Grief Healing Support Centre (BFOYR). Your presence and contributions have made a meaningful impact on the lives of those navigating through grief, and for that, we are truly grateful.

**Please be informed that our office will be closed from
December 22nd, 2023 to January 7th, 2024.**

This time allows for our dedicated staff team and volunteers to spend quality time with their loved ones. During this period, our regular services will be temporarily suspended.

**Please note that emails and voicemails will not be
monitored or responded to during this time.**

Rest assured, we will return on Monday January 8th 2024, recharged and ready to continue providing all the support and resources you rely on.

Warm regards, The Grief Healing Support Centre Team



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[In case of Emergency, please call 911](#)

COPE 24/7
1-855-310-2673

Lighthouse for Grieving Children
905-337-2333

Family Services York Region
905-895-2371

Kids Help Line 24/7
1-800-668-6868



Follow Us On Social Media

Instagram

[@griefhealingsupportcentre](#)

Facebook

[Grief Healing Support Centre](#)

LinkedIn

[Grief Healing Support Centre](#)

Twitter

[@GriefHealingSC](#)



Contact Us

Executive Director
ed@bfoyr.com

Outreach
outreach@bfoyr.com

Finance/Bookkeeper
admin@bfoyr.com

Programs /Volunteer
programs@bfoyr.com

Events:
events@bfoyr.com



Our Address:

Bereaved Families of Ontario
York Region
17075 Leslie Street Unit #9
Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 8E1