



# JOURNEYS



The Valley Home Care Patient and Family Advisory Council has reviewed and approved this material to ensure that the patient and family perspective has been included.

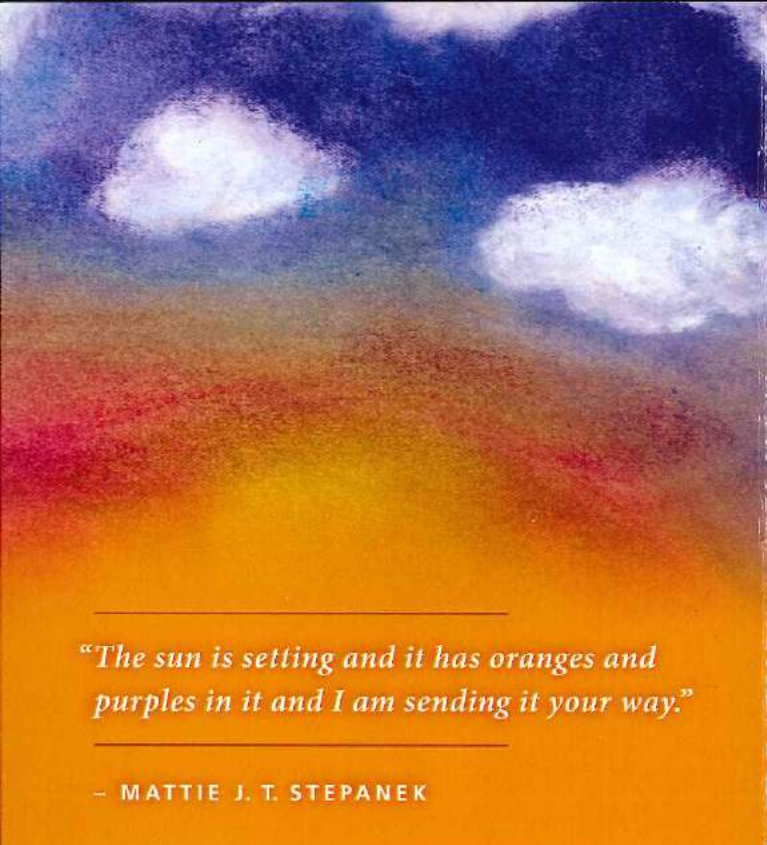
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*"The sun is setting and it has oranges and purples in it and I am sending it your way."*

— MATTIE J. T. STEPANEK

## THE PROGRAM

Journeys is a support program for children and teens who are faced with the life-threatening illness or death of a loved one. Fear, anxiety, anger and grief are all normal responses to these life events. Children and adolescents need a safe place to express these feelings. Our professional clinicians use art and play therapy to help children develop skills to cope better with anticipated and actual losses.

## ART THERAPY

Journeys is staffed by art therapists who use creative processes, as well as art materials, to help children channel their feelings, understand changes, learn new behaviors and build resiliency. Art works created at Journeys do not have to be "pretty." They can help reflect or release uncomfortable emotions, thus enabling children and teens to master and accept them. But if a child or teen wants to get their mind off what happened, or to preserve a happy memory, the art therapist will help them to create something beautiful and soothing. Art making is always geared toward meeting your child's needs.

## INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS

Most children and teens served by Journeys meet weekly for 45-minute sessions. Individual sessions allow them to "move at their own pace," determining the aspects of their loss that are the most important or least painful at any given time. Grief is a journey in which both children and adults develop strength to deal with more challenging aspects of loss over time. It cannot be rushed. Journeys creates a safe environment for children and teens to deal with any aspect of the grieving process.

## GROUPS

Groups provide children and teens with the opportunity to connect with peers who have experienced a similar loss. They are able to compare and contrast how the death has affected their lives, the challenges they have faced and coping strategies that are helpful. This decreases the sense of isolation that sometimes accompanies loss and empowers participants through the act of supporting each other. Journeys groups are formed when there are enough children or teens within the same age range enrolled in the program who are interested in group participation. When formed, the groups run for ten sessions and are closed to new members for the duration. This enables group participants to develop trust and open up with each other.

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES PROVIDED

Journeys also provides death and illness education, as well as crisis intervention for schools.

## OUR THERAPISTS

Our clinicians all hold master's degrees in art therapy and are also board certified, licensed counselors. Each therapist has many years of experience helping children face loss and has devoted their career to helping children heal.

## COST

Journeys fees are moderate to make our services affordable for every child and family. No family is denied services due to inability to pay.

## HOW TO REACH US

To learn more about our program or to schedule an appointment to enroll your children or teens in Journeys, please call 201-291-6243.