

ASU co-hosts grief conference to provide knowledge, support to bereaved families

Conference designed to connect bereaved families and grief professionals through workshops and discussions

May 3, 2006, PHOENIX – Arizona State University will co-host a five-day conference featuring a panel of healthcare and bereavement professionals experienced in the aspects losing a child, grief counseling, and fostering family resilience. The conference, “When a Child Dies: The Vow to Remember, The Call to Comfort,” will be held May 31 through June 4, at the Radisson Fort McDowell Casino Hotel, Fountain Hills, Ariz.

“As a society, it is imperative that we learn to support grieving children and their families,” said Joanne Cacciatore, lecturer, department of Social Work at ASU’s West campus. “Without loving, supportive care children suffer and life becomes more difficult to rebuild. Community responsiveness is not an option, it’s a duty.” Cacciatore the founder and CEO of the M.I.S.S. Foundation, a not-for-profit organization committed to providing crisis support and long term aid to families after the death of a child.

The conference is sponsored by the MISS Foundation; Elizabeth Kübler Ross Foundation; and ASU’s College of Human Services, department of Social Work. It is designed for anyone bereaved as a result of a child’s death, as well as social workers, psychologists, nurses, physicians, and other bereavement professionals. Featured speakers include:

- Peter Barr, M.D., Ph.D., a senior staff physician in neonatology at the Royal Alexandria Hospital for Children. Barr has a long-standing interest in perinatal bereavement and co-authored “Stillbirth and Newborn Death: Death and life are the same mysteries.”
- Elio Frattaroli, M.D., assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania. Frattaroli is a faculty member of the Psychoanalytic Center of Philadelphia and has a full-time private practice serves as a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst.
- David Kessler co-authored “On Grief and Grieving” and “Life Lessons” with the late Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, a world renowned grief expert. Kessler is director of palliative care for Citrus Valley Health Partners. He also serves as a specialist reserve officer for the Los Angeles Police Department’s trauma team.

The conference is devoted to helping bereaved parents connect with one another, and to provide knowledge and support to healthcare professionals through creative workshops and lectures. In addition, “Kids in Sympathy and Support” (KISS), will be available for grieving children and teens ages 4 to 17. KISS provides grieving children with therapeutic and non-therapeutic intervention and support. KISS Camp features therapeutic workshops, psychoeducational sessions, safety and prevention groups.

For additional information or to register for the conference visit <http://www.missfoundation.org/conference> or contact Joanne Cacciatore at ASU's West campus, 602-543-6659.

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