



UPLIFT Manual for Caregivers

WELCOME!

We welcome you to Uplift’s grief support groups. Uplift will continue to offer these groups in a virtual space, using Zoom. We will continue to assess ways to offer in-person services in 2024-25 and we are committed to continuing to focus on the needs of families and honor your grief through this setting.

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Associate Directors
Family Services at Uplift



ABOUT UPLIFT

Uplift is a nonprofit organization that offers free grief support groups to children, teens, and their caregivers. We use a peer-support model so that support comes from each other because we believe in each person’s ability to heal.

Grief Support Groups are facilitated by an Uplift Master’s level clinician, a trained volunteer, and/or a social work intern supervised by an Uplift clinician. We work as part of a team. This means that you may not see us in your child’s or your group; however, your assigned Family Services Clinician can support you outside of group with grief or other resources you may need.

Grief Support Groups

Children and teens are grouped based on developmental levels. We use school grades to determine this. Each person is placed in a group with their peers; however, there may be situations in which a child may be in a different group than what is listed below.

Younger Children:	K to 3rd grades with Caregivers
Older Children:	4th to 7th grades
Older Teens:	8th to 12th grades
Caregivers:	Adults raising grieving children

We also offer:

- **Español Grief Group for Spanish-speaking Families**
- **LGBTQIA+ Youth Services Grief Group for Teens ages 14-18 years old**

Each group is assigned either a clinician, trained volunteer and/or intern to guide the activities and discussions. We meet for 5 times to define what grief is, talk about the feelings that happen with grief, identify safe coping skills, find ways to remember the person(s) who died, and build on our healing journey. Each session builds on the previous session, so attendance at each session is important to the healing process.

Virtual Groups

Uplift will continue to offer groups online. Families will be able to participate with a phone (cell or landline), a smartphone, or other electronic device with internet connection. Please note, because we work as a team at Uplift, clinicians share information and responsibilities, as needed. In the event your Group Clinician is unable to facilitate a group, every effort will be made to bring in another Uplift Clinician to support your group at its regularly scheduled time. In some cases, there may need to be an adjustment with your group time, so that we can provide appropriate coverage. We will make every effort to inform you about any potential changes in advance. We appreciate your flexibility and understanding should this situation arise.

Caregivers Groups

Caregivers learn how to support a grieving child or teen in this group. Caregivers – parents, stepparents, grandparents, foster parents, aunts, uncles, etc. – gather at a different time/space to learn from each other what is typical behavior, what might be related to grief, or a combination. Caregivers also find support in raising grieving children. Some caregivers are also grieving, and this group serves as a space to have adult conversations. As with the grief support groups with children and teens, it is vital to have consistent participation and attendance so that we build a community of adults who understand, support, and trust each other with our unique stories.

Agreements for Caregivers

1. **We** are here to receive and give support respectfully to each other and our children.
2. **We** acknowledge that we all have lived experiences that shape us.
3. **We** will remember that we are more than what has happened to us.
4. **We** will greet each other with an open mind and open heart.

Tips for Virtual Group

- Create a Private Space:
 - As quiet as possible
 - Few distractions from pets, electronic devices, other people not in group
 - Allow freedom of speech (no one judging or restricting what others say)
 - Protect the identity and speech of group participants
 - If possible, avoid having things in the background that are very private and personal
- Dress for Success:
 - Dress comfortably and appropriately, as if you were coming to in-person group
 - Allow for movement – jumping, sitting, twirling, dancing
- Take Care of Business:
 - Remind children to use the bathroom before group starts
 - Eat a snack before the start of group
 - Have some water in group for taking small sips
 - Gather supplies ahead of start time so we can do the activities without delays



Frequently Asked Questions

Child/Teen doesn't want to continue, what do I do?

We encourage families to have children/teens, and their caregivers participate consistently and commit to attend five (5) times – one (1) hour each week for five (5) weeks. Each week has a different theme, activities and discussion, and builds on previous themes. However, we do not encourage children/teens to be forced to come to group. Caregivers can attend the caregivers' group even if their child/teen is not participating in their group.

Do I have to attend the Caregivers Group?

We recommend that caregivers attend the Caregivers Group for the reasons described above. However, it is not a requirement. If there is another adult who is involved in the child's life or helping to raise the child/teen, they can participate.

For the *Come Together!* group for children in kindergarten, first, second & third grades, we ask that the caregiver participate in that group. Young children cannot be expected to sit still for long periods, nor to keep long periods of concentration. By having both a caregiver and the child(ren) together, both can do the activities, have dedicated time together, and have meaningful discussions. Each week, we will ask the caregiver and the child(ren) to work on a simple task during the week and report back the following week. Another adult can participate if the caregiver cannot; we ask that the same person show up each week with the child.

Do I have to buy any materials for group?

Uplift staff is designing these virtual groups with the families we serve in mind. We recognize that these groups are voluntary, and we do not want families to feel burdened by participating. The activities may require simple materials that you may already have at home. Examples may include:

- ✓ Pencils, pens, rubber bands, tape, or children's glue
- ✓ Paper – even if one side is already used
- ✓ Markers, colored pencils, crayons
- ✓ Empty box, envelope or empty tube of toilet paper or paper towels
- ✓ Scissors (round tips for younger children)
- ✓ Dried beans or uncooked small pasta (penne, macaroni, fusilli, etc.)

Please inform your Family Services Clinician about any needs you may have. While Uplift may not be able to provide these services, we will work with you to identify a resource for you and your family.



My child has a hard time staying focused online. What can I do?

Please know that for some children or teens, being online for group is not easy due to the concentration needed to stay focused, the topic discussed, or needing to move. Some ways to deal with this are:

- ★ Turn off screens – phones, TV, computers, video games, etc. for an hour before group starts, if possible. Keep these devices off during group.
- ★ Take a walk or run or do physical exercise for 30 minutes before group starts
- ★ Eat a snack 10 to 15 minutes before group starts to ease any hunger pangs
- ★ Complete other tasks, such as homework, so that it does not preoccupy your thoughts
- ★ Color, draw or make a zentangle to settle into group

RESOURCES

Family Services Clinicians

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| ➤ Chabeli Angeline Noval, MSW, LSW (she/her/ella) | Chabeli@UpliftPhilly.org |
| ➤ CJ Roseberry, MSW (they/them/theirs) | CJ@UpliftPhilly.org |
| ➤ Crystal Wortham, MSW, LSW (she/her/hers) | Crystal@UpliftPhilly.org |
| ➤ Darcie Rudolf, MA, NCC,LPC (she/her/hers) | DarcieR@UpliftPhilly.org |
| ➤ Samantha Anthony, MS, NCC,LPC (she/her/hers) | Samantha@UpliftPhilly.org |
| ➤ Teresa Méndez-Quigley, MSW (she/her/ella) | Teresa@UpliftPhilly.org |

Philly HopeLine

Uplift’s free and confidential helpline is staffed by Uplift clinicians who specialize in free grief and emotional support and provide community resources. Translation services available for 100+ languages.

1-833-PHL-HOPE (1-833-745-4673)



2024-2025 Hours:

Mondays – Thursdays: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Closed on Federal Holidays &
Uplift Office Closures.