



A CALL TO ACTION

The health and well-being of our communities--and indeed our world--depends on how we care for the millions of grieving children in our midst. Sadly, nearly half of American youth currently live in families impacted by death, divorce, separation or abandonment. A child's unresolved grief from this painful family condition tears at the fabric of our society. Risk of depression and even suicide escalates; academic achievement is hindered; youth violence, drug and alcohol use and teen pregnancies increase. RAINBOWS is designed to prevent such devastating consequences by coming to the aid of these children in a unique and effective way: not by counseling or therapy, but by peer support in programs.

RAINBOWS OFFERS CHILDREN THE FOLLOWING *BENEFITS*:

- * awareness of feelings - naming, acknowledging, expressing, and managing them
- * prevention of destructive behaviors, e.g., chemical abuse, unwanted pregnancies
- * reducing depression, anxiety, and stress
- * improved school attendance and academic performance
- * management of anger
- * learn appropriate coping mechanisms
- * encourages positive behavior
- * unconditional acceptance in the group
- * develop and strengthen problem-solving skills
- * develop positive goals for themselves
- * positive direction during their journey toward reconciling their loss
- * confidential expression of grief
- * a safe environment to share personal stories
- * understand how to communicate verbally and through listening
- * learn how to be compassionate to others
- * a journal to write or draw feelings for understanding and release
- * a caring adult facilitator to attentively listen and guide children to a healthy resolution of a difficult family transition
- * increased self-esteem
- * better physical health
- * better communication in peer and family relationships
- * opportunity to meet new friends who have shared experiences
- * emotional healing