



CHARITIES Committee

Ralph Orleck, Chairman



The RISAA Charities Committee exists to lend a helping hand to others in need, and is a way of giving back to our community.

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTION

Friends Way

Report by
**STEVE
MEDEIROS**



It's difficult to face death, especially when you're a child or teen. Your grief is different - sometimes silent and overlooked. At Friend's Way, they offer a safe and nurturing environment where children can begin to heal when someone significant in their lives has died.



Friend's Way is Rhode Island's only bereavement center for children and teens, ages three to eighteen. Their programs are conducted by highly qualified, industry trained professionals and volunteers, and are based on proven methods of grief counseling, including peer-to-peer support and expressive arts.

Friends Way program sessions consist of children and teens sharing their feelings and reactions to grief in an honest and open way.

These sessions are supervised by clinical staff members and facilitated by a team of professionally trained volunteers. During the sessions children are given the opportunity to express themselves through creative activities such as painting, drawing and clay sculpting. These activities help them demonstrate their feelings when they simply cannot find the

words to do so.

At the beginning of each session, children, their parents and caregivers share a meal. Following the meal, while their children participate in group sessions, parents and care givers are on site talking with each other about their own experiences and their children's

reactions to loss.

Friends Way is also a primary resource for community organizations throughout Rhode Island, including schools, organizations and first responders. They provide education for their staff members about working with grieving children and offer on-site support and guidance in times of crisis.

The Friends Way quality programs are provided at no charge to families. Fundraising activities and community support fund 100% of the programs.

Also, volunteers are the heart of Friends Way. If you are a sensitive and compassionate person who would like to donate your time in helping this valuable community program, please contact them at 401-921-0980.

The Friends Way facility is located at 765 West Shore Road, Warwick, RI. You can obtain more information by visiting their web site at www.friendsway.org.



Ryan Loiselle, LICSW, Program Director at Friends Way, accepted the RISAA donation.

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