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Grief After Death

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Summary of Grief After Death

I wanted to learn more about childhood grief, specifically what benefits children who are grieving. I enrolled in *HPR 119, Loss in the Lives of Children and Adolescents*. During the course, Professor Hames told the class about FRIENDSWAY, which is a child and family bereavement center located in Warwick, Rhode Island. I began volunteering at FRIENDSWAY in September 2016 as a facilitator in the elementary age group. In my group, we played games pertaining to grief, read books about death, and did activities such as arts and crafts. As my time in the group progressed, I decided to create a program evaluation to see from the children's perspective which activities they enjoyed the most and which they thought were the most beneficial. I surveyed children between the ages of nine to thirteen. The survey featured questions about their overall experience at FRIENDSWAY. There were also questions about which activities they enjoyed the most and what they would change about FRIENDSWAY. The overall results showed that all of the children surveyed had a positive experience at FRIENDSWAY. The majority of the children reported arts and crafts as their favorite activity. Only two children wanted to change FRIENDSWAY by eliminating use of the books about grief. Both children felt that sometimes the type of losses in the books were too specific. Upon seeing the results of the survey, I suggested that activities that include group bonding and sharing should be promoted. I also suggested arts and crafts should be continued. Books should still be used, but the amount should be adjusted to the particular needs of a group. During the completion of this project, I learned the importance of child bereavement services and resources. Such resources are crucial for bereaved children and their families. In addition, I learned what is most helpful in assisting them in their grief.