

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Grief Intervention Support Team (GIST) is to use understanding and best practice components of psychological first aid to identify and provide a safe, effective, and compassionate response in school, workplace, and other community situations involving children, teens and adults who are in crisis over a loss by death. GIST is coordinated by Hospice of the Piedmont staff and is available across our service area: the city of Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Augusta, Buckingham, Culpeper, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Green, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, and Rappahannock.

The GIST program is a commitment for a true community partnership and open communication between Hospice of the Piedmont and local schools, workplaces, law enforcement agencies, mental health providers, and persons who are grieving; it is a commitment to enhancing regional community health.

For more information, or to request GIST assistance or free in-service trainings on end-of-life and grief-related issues, contact Hospice of the Piedmont at 434-817-6900 or 1-800-975-5501 or visit our website at www.hopva.org.

Hospice of the Piedmont
675 Peter Jefferson Parkway, Suite 300
Charlottesville, VA 22911

Contact us:
1-800-975-5501
www.hopva.org
bereavementinfo@hopva.org



GRIEF INTERVENTION SUPPORT TEAM (GIST)



*A vital bereavement
service available
at no charge*
to schools, workplaces,
and the community.*

* The GIST program is made possible thanks to financial support from The Wardle Family Foundation



MEMBERS OF GIST

GIST consists of members of the Hospice of the Piedmont staff and, depending on availability and the services desired, may include:

- One or more professional bereavement counselors and specially trained bereavement volunteers
- Certified art therapists, social workers, chaplains
- Other Hospice of the Piedmont personnel

We encourage school and workplace administrative staff to actively participate in GIST sessions.

PROTOCOL FOR GIST:

Hospice of the Piedmont understands that, just as the process of grief is unique to each individual, it is important that the response to each grief-related situation must consider the unique and wide range of variables involved.

With this in mind, the following is the general protocol of GIST counseling:

- Establish rapport
- Tell their story
- Identify major problem(s)
- Assess for safety issues
- Deal with feelings
- Explore alternatives
- The group and GIST staff will work together to develop an action plan
- If appropriate, make referrals (ongoing services or crisis services)

THE GOALS OF GIST

- **Safety:** To ensure the safety of persons who are grieving a loss by death.
- **Stability:** To promote the overall stability of persons who are grieving a loss by death, and to provide emotional support, concrete feedback, and assistance that may include problem-solving and the development of short-term plans.
- **Connection:** To help connect persons who are grieving a loss by death to formal and informal supports and resources for follow-up bereavement care.



“I just wanted to thank you for your assistance. Having that meeting has been one of the hardest things I have had to do as an educator. I appreciate your kindness, professionalism, and genuineness, and I know the kids did as well.”

- J.W., Community Member

