



# Friends of Aine

Center for Grieving Children & Families

**Our Mission is to...** Help children and families grieving a death navigate their path to a hopeful future.

**Our Vision is...** A world where no child grieves alone.

**Our Values ...** Kindness, Compassion, Connections, & Courage

Friends of Aine established a [Code of Conduct](#) for all registered participants.

Group members will be asked to sign this document in session one of a group series.

This guideline assists in understanding the requirements to participate in FOA groups.

These expectations can help individuals determine if the peer-to-peer group model at FOA is the best fit for your family/children.



Closed Group defined: Membership for group services is determined by space availability and registration screening by FOA Program Staff. Group participants remain consistent throughout the series session. No new members will join the group after session two (2), supporting continuity and allowing members an opportunity to develop trust and connection with peers and facilitators.



Friends of Aine groups are peer-to-peer grief support. FOA services are not clinically based. For professional therapeutic services, please refer to [Psychology Today](#) for a list of providers meeting your criteria and needs. <https://www.psychologytoday.com>



Please advise the Program Coordinator if you or a family member require special accommodations or have a medical condition staff should be made aware of during your time at FOA. [Mandi@friendsofaine.com](mailto:Mandi@friendsofaine.com)



For the safety of all group members, staff, and facilitators, all participants are expected to attend without the influence of non-prescription drugs or alcohol. Smoking on the premises is not allowed. Weapons of any kind are prohibited on FOA building, dwellings, and property.



For the safety of all group members, staff, and facilitators we ask all members maintain proper physical boundaries. Aggressive physical contact or verbal hostility of any kind is not tolerated and will result in the termination of group participation.



Because group structure relies on schedule constraints, please make every effort to be on time for each session. Family arrival is at **5:45pm**. Caretakers check children in to the Main Center at [226 Coolidge Ave.](#) [Adult groups are operated at our adjacent FOA building located at 220 Coolidge Ave.](#)



Concern and caring for each other is an integral part of the group process, please let us know if you will be late or missing a session. Please make every effort to attend each session of the registered series. If your family decides not to continue for any reason, kindly make the Program Coordinator aware. [Mandi@friendsofaine.com](mailto:Mandi@friendsofaine.com)



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Please silence devices and be prepared to stay in the group without interruption.



**Confidentiality:** Respect others' right to confidentiality. Do not use names of fellow participants in discussions outside the group. Whatever is shared within the group, remains confidential. Caretakers should refrain from interrogating minors about group specifics regarding their peers.



Exception to this rule pertains to comments of self-harm, victimization, or intent to harm others. Additionally, group confidentiality is compromised if a participant is experiencing a mental health crisis, requiring professional, clinical intervention.



**Respect:** Everyone grieves in their own, unique way, and the context for each person's loss is different. It is essential to respect others' right to their feelings and thoughts in grief.



Cultivate an attitude of acceptance (non-judgment) for yourself and others. We can compare but refraining from judgement is a group requirement.



Actively listening to other participants share without interrupting is the most compassionate, healing response we can offer. Facilitators will aim to create a space that is shared, allowing each person time to express him/herself. At times, the facilitator may interrupt so that everyone has the opportunity to share.



Avoid providing unsolicited advice or taking on the responsibility to advocate for or "fix" another's grief.



You are free to share as much or little as you would like at any given session. Groups at FOA honor the "I Pass" rule. Often participants benefit just as much from listening to their peers as they do from sharing. No one will be pressured to share, but everyone who feels comfortable sharing will be given that chance.



Feelings are neither right nor wrong; they just are. While you may share some commonalities in grief experiences, no two people are the same. Members of a family unit also have different relationships and responses to their own grief. Take what works for you and let go of what does not serve you. Similarly, offer what works for you knowing it may or may not work for others.



Facilitators, staff, and ambassadors at FOA want to promote a comfortable environment and experience for all. You are the expert on your needs: you are encouraged to speak up if the room is too warm, you need a break, you cannot hear, etc.



Allow yourself the time to grieve at your own pace and consider prioritizing self-care in between sessions.