The Growing Through Grief program provides in-school grief support to elementary, middle and high school students who have experienced the death of a parent, sibling, family member or friend. Park Nicollet Foundation and Park Nicollet Health Services partner with 72 schools across 13 school districts to support more than 520 students each week. The only program in Minnesota that provides intensive school-based grief support, Growing Through Grief helps 95 percent of participants improve their coping skills. Grief services are provided free of charge to students, including one-to-one counseling, support groups and crisis support. Collaborative crisis management support for death related incidences are also provided to the school community.

The generosity of our donors in 2018 gave children and youth struggling with the death of a family member or friend the extra support and education they needed to learn to cope with their grief.

“"My Dad died during a boating accident when I was 5 years old. My 5-year-old cousin and I were in the boat when it happened.

"As a little girl I had no idea about the long journey ahead of me. Unless you’ve experienced a tragic loss, you don’t understand the feelings of sadness, depression and guilt brought on by grief. Different years in school caused different triggers for my grief - it’s not a straight line. It’s not something you ‘just get over.’ There were times I chose unhealthy ways to cope - like self-harming, or alcohol and drugs.

"I’m grateful throughout school I had my grief group and my counselor. In grief group there’s no space for judgement. We all had a piece of us missing. When I didn’t feel like I could talk to my family, I could always talk to my grief group. They became my second family. Today at 18, my journey to being in a good and stable place is because of Growing Through Grief and my grief counselor Meredith. I would not have survived without them."

–Samantha, Growing Through Grief participant
Growing Through Grief

2018 Highlights

- Assisted schools in responding to 16 death related crisis events, supporting over 3,000 students and school staff members.
- Established the Growing Through Grief Advisory Council with 17 community members, including school professionals, parents, first responders and health care professionals.
- Created Growing Through Grief curriculum for elementary, middle and high school and post-crisis grief groups. This curriculum supports our current school partners and will be used to support other interested districts across the country.
- Created grief educational materials for training school staff and community-based organizations.
- Hosted trainings in two school communities on the impact of grief on child development and crisis-based strategies to address student emotional, social and academic needs while managing grief.

Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Grade Level</th>
<th>53% High School</th>
<th>32% Middle School</th>
<th>15% Elementary School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Relationship to Person who Died</td>
<td>37% Father</td>
<td>23% Mother</td>
<td>15% Sibling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause of Death</td>
<td>51% medical</td>
<td>12% alcohol/drugs</td>
<td>12% suicide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

99% Improved knowledge of grief process
84% Improved ability to concentrate in school
97% Would refer a friend

To learn more about the impact of your support visit parknicollet.com/foundationimpact