

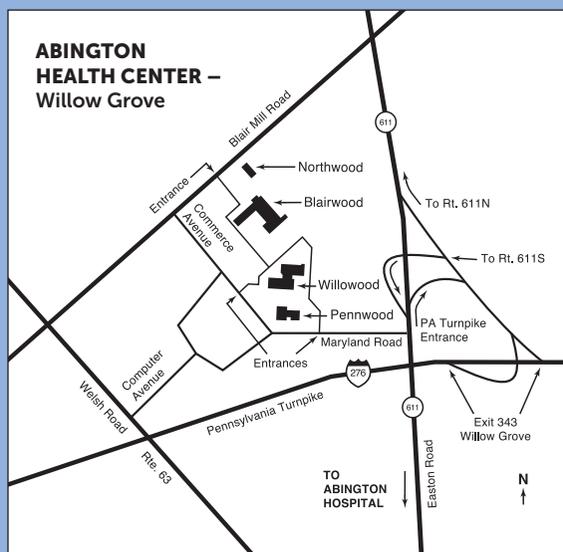
Volunteer Facilitators

Trained bereavement volunteer facilitators are the heart of our program. Many of our volunteers have advanced degrees in social services, nursing, education or psychology. Most have experienced a loss in their own lives and wish to give back.

Our staff and volunteers work closely with children, teens and their parents/caregivers to create a supportive environment where sharing feelings and concerns help participants move through the healing process. A training program is required for new volunteers to attain the skills, knowledge and techniques to work with the groups.

Opportunities to Help

Safe Harbor needs your help to sustain and expand our program. Our program is reliant on contributions from individuals, businesses, organizations and foundations. Please contact Abington Health Foundation at 215-481-4438 or the Safe Harbor office at 215-481-5983 for more information about donations or gifts-in-kind.



Located only 10 minutes north of the hospital, Abington Health Center – Willow Grove is one-half mile from Route 611 (Easton Road). The center has entrances at 2701 Blair Mill Road and at 2500 Maryland Road.

From the Pennsylvania Turnpike, take exit 343. Go south on 611 (toward Abington) and immediately turn right on Maryland Road. The entrance to AHC – Willow Grove will be on the right. Use Parking Lot G.



Safe Harbor Program

Abington Health Center – Willow Grove
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Safe Harbor

A program for grieving children,
teens and their families



Safe Harbor

The loss of a parent, caregiver or sibling is a devastating experience for a child. Who can they talk to? Who will really listen? Their friends may shy away because they don't know what to say. It's also hard to talk to the surviving parent or family member because they are grieving as well.

Abington – Jefferson Health's Safe Harbor program provides ongoing grief support groups for children, teens and their parents or caregivers. This is a caring environment where they can come for support and understanding.

At Safe Harbor, we believe that it is a natural process to grieve after a loss. The duration and intensity of grief is unique for each individual. Support, caring and acceptance from other individuals provides people with a natural capacity to heal.

Our program offers many support sessions including children and teen groups for ages four to 18, a young adult group for ages 19 to 29, parent/caregiver groups, as well as a "Moving On" group. A "Healing After Suicide" support group is available, based on demand, for those grieving a death due to suicide.



Our Facility

Safe Harbor is a warm and comfortable environment that enables the staff to support grieving children, teens and their families. Our spacious facility offers a large art room, filled with an extensive supply of materials to encourage participants to express their emotions and creativity. Other rooms include four different support group rooms filled with over-sized pillows and stuffed animals inviting our children and teens to hang out and relax during group activities and sharing sessions. The Volcano Room, with its cushioned walls, floors and punching bags, creates a place where children can express their anger, frustration, rage or sadness within a protected setting. Our Parents'/Caregivers' Room is a quiet place that offers grieving parents and caregivers a place to meet and share with others undergoing similar experiences with loss.

Healing through Expressive Arts

At Safe Harbor, our music therapist uses the power of music to enhance the healing process. Children and adult groups share sadness, anger, pride and laughter through various musical activities. Music making often helps group members to gain respect and peer validation by sharing the deep emotions that have been brought alive through music. Drumming, improvisation, song writing and recording are just

some of the rewarding music therapy activities. In addition, we offer sessions with both our Art and Dance specialists. The expressive arts enable children and teens to transcend verbal limitations in their understanding and sharing of emotions associated with their loss. Providing a combination of music, art, dance, and movement activities ensures that we empower every child and teen to find their expressive voice. The safe environment created in this program opens the musical hearts of all our families.

Camp Charlie

Camp Charlie, a week-long day camp for bereaved children ages six through 12, is held in June at Abington Health Center – Willow Grove. Staff, volunteer facilitators and teen buddies lead campers through a week of healing and fun. Activities and challenges are used to guide and enhance the healing process for both campers and buddies. Art is used to memorialize, drama/movement to tell the story, and music and song writing to say goodbye. Fun challenge activities provide an opportunity to build trust and communication skills. On the final day of Camp Charlie, campers, buddies and family members gather for a picnic party and special service of remembrance.

