Meet Our Grief Experts

Terese Vorsheck

Ms. Vorsheck is the Director of the Highmark Caring Place, a Center for Grieving Children, Adolescents and Their Families. In this role, she is responsible for directing the strategies, initiatives, services and programs of the Caring Place in its four locations – Pittsburgh, Erie, Lemoine (Central Pa.) and Warrendale. This includes peer support groups for grieving children and families, referral services for grieving families, professional consultation and training programs, community outreach and awareness strategies, volunteer partnership initiatives, education on grief and child development for families, special family program and model replication. Prior to her work with the Highmark Caring Place, Ms. Vorsheck worked for 13 years as a licensed psychologist in private practice. She has extensive experience in the field of death and dying, group process and family systems, with an emphasis on child development. Ms. Vorsheck graduated from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania with a bachelor’s degree in psychology. She went on to get her master’s degree in clinical psychology from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania and completed a post-graduate training program at Gestalt Institute of Cleveland in Ohio.

Andrea Lurier, Ph.D.

Dr. Lurier has been the program manager of the Highmark Caring Place, a Center for Grieving Children, Adolescents and Their Families in Pittsburgh, since 1998. She has presented on a range of topics related to children's grief and support group models related to grieving children and families. Her dissertation focused on understanding the experiences of inner-city families who experienced traumatic deaths. She brings 16 years of experience in child assessment, research and clinical interventions for children and families and is Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) certified. She received her bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Rochester as well as her master’s degree in clinical psychology and her Ph.D. in counseling psychology from the University of Pittsburgh.
Nina M. Ferraro, MS, LPC

Ms. Ferraro became the program manager of the Highmark Caring Place, a Center for Grieving Children, Adolescents, and their Families in Erie in 2011. Prior to joining the Caring Place, she worked with children and adolescents diagnosed with autism at the Barber National Institute in Erie. During her tenure at Barber, she was the clinical coordinator of mental health and behavioral services and coordinator of the therapeutic activities programs. Ms. Ferraro also held a supervisory role at Erie County Care Management during the implementation of HealthChoices in Erie County. She also was an administrative case manager with Case Management Support Services in Erie, where she worked with the family-based mental health programs. Ms. Ferraro has worked with children and families since 1992. A licensed professional counselor, Ms. Ferraro is a graduate of Gannon University with a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a master’s degree in counseling psychology. She received a post-master’s certificate in advanced counseling, also from Gannon.

Krista Ball, M.S., ATR-BC

Ms. Ball became the program manager of the Highmark Caring Place, a Center for Grieving Children, Adolescents, and their Families in Warrendale in February 2012. Prior to becoming manager, she worked as the family services coordinator for three years. Ms. Ball has worked with children and families since 2000, and has had a variety of professional experiences, including providing child and family therapy in outpatient and in-home settings, implementing prevention services in the school system and performing developmental assessments and screening for children affected by parental substance abuse. Ms. Ball also worked to develop and implement the art therapy program at the Pines Residential Treatment Facility in Portsmouth, Va. A registered, board certified art therapist, Ms. Ball received her bachelor’s degree in art therapy from Mercyhurst College in Erie. She went on to get her master’s degree in art therapy from Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, Va. where she was the recipient of the Paul Fink, M.D. Award for academic, clinical and research excellence.
John Kajic, Psy.D.

Dr. Kajic has served as program manager of the Highmark Caring Place, a Center for Grieving Children, Adolescents and Their Families in Lemoine (Central Pa.) since 2003. Dr. Kajic is a member of the Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC), and he conducted his dissertation on secondary post-traumatic stress disorder in family members who were victims of the Bosnian civil war. He previously served as the Clinical Director/Program Coordinator for St. Joseph Orphanage in Cincinnati. Dr. Kajic has had a variety of professional experiences including work in an adult and adolescent crisis stabilization unit, an adolescent child day treatment unit setting, and with state correctional facilities in South Florida. He also has experience in working with adult and adolescent substance abuse, mental retardation, and adult eating disorders. He received his Psy.D in clinical psychology from Miami Institute of Psychology, a master’s degree in clinical psychology from Shippensburg University and a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Flagler College.

Pablo Salinas, Jr., Ed.M.

Mr. Salinas became the program manager of the Highmark Caring Place, a Center for Grieving Children, Adolescents, and their Families in Warrendale in 2008. Before he came to the United States, he was a child psychotherapist in his home country, the Philippines, for more than a decade. There, he provided assessment and psychotherapy to a wide range of child and adolescent populations including the behaviorally and emotionally disturbed, the autistic and developmentally disabled. He also conducted seminars and workshops with a variety of professional and non-professional groups. Mr. Salinas served as director of the Adult Outpatient Program of Dr. Warren E. Smith Health Centers, a community mental health center in Philadelphia. He has also served as director of Programs in Counseling for Philadelphia’s Resources for Human Development, working with adults who have substance abuse and mental health problems. Mr. Salinas is a cum laude graduate of the University of the Philippines with a bachelor’s degree in psychology. He received his master’s degree in education (counseling) from Rutgers University on a Fulbright scholarship.