

*Tides*<sup>™</sup>



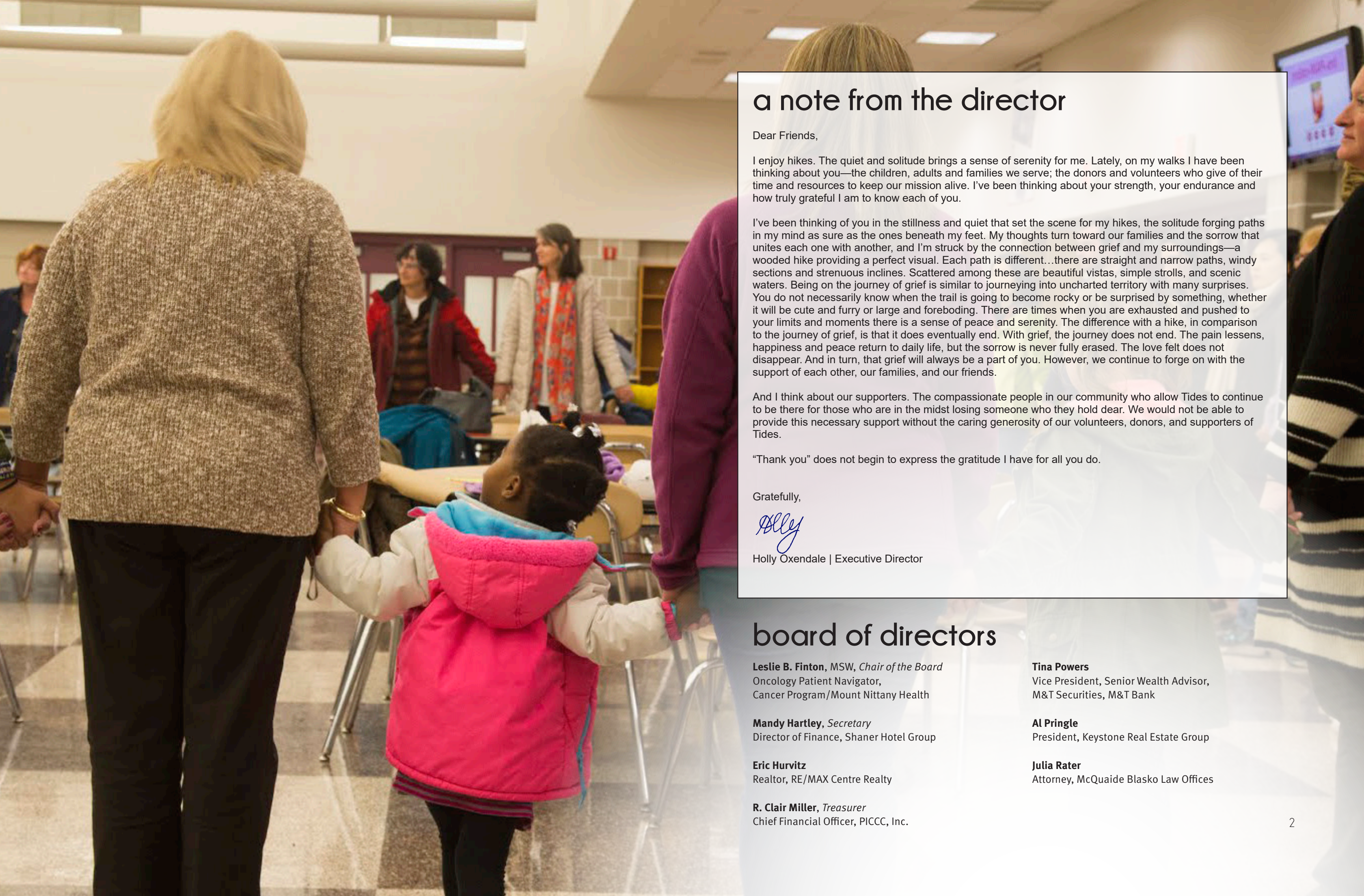
A SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR  
GRIEVING CHILDREN, TEENS, AND  
THE PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEM.

# Community Newsletter

*for friends and supporters of Tides*

Spring 2021





## a note from the director

Dear Friends,

I enjoy hikes. The quiet and solitude brings a sense of serenity for me. Lately, on my walks I have been thinking about you—the children, adults and families we serve; the donors and volunteers who give of their time and resources to keep our mission alive. I've been thinking about your strength, your endurance and how truly grateful I am to know each of you.

I've been thinking of you in the stillness and quiet that set the scene for my hikes, the solitude forging paths in my mind as sure as the ones beneath my feet. My thoughts turn toward our families and the sorrow that unites each one with another, and I'm struck by the connection between grief and my surroundings—a wooded hike providing a perfect visual. Each path is different...there are straight and narrow paths, windy sections and strenuous inclines. Scattered among these are beautiful vistas, simple strolls, and scenic waters. Being on the journey of grief is similar to journeying into uncharted territory with many surprises. You do not necessarily know when the trail is going to become rocky or be surprised by something, whether it will be cute and furry or large and foreboding. There are times when you are exhausted and pushed to your limits and moments there is a sense of peace and serenity. The difference with a hike, in comparison to the journey of grief, is that it does eventually end. With grief, the journey does not end. The pain lessens, happiness and peace return to daily life, but the sorrow is never fully erased. The love felt does not disappear. And in turn, that grief will always be a part of you. However, we continue to forge on with the support of each other, our families, and our friends.

And I think about our supporters. The compassionate people in our community who allow Tides to continue to be there for those who are in the midst losing someone who they hold dear. We would not be able to provide this necessary support without the caring generosity of our volunteers, donors, and supporters of Tides.

"Thank you" does not begin to express the gratitude I have for all you do.

Gratefully,

Holly Oxendale | Executive Director

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*Thank you!*

We are overwhelmed with gratitude for your sincere generosity over this past year. Thanks to you, we exceeded our 2020 budgetary goal and raised over \$96,300 in support of Tides programming. Below are just a few ways your gifts helped us through 2020 and the pandemic.

# volunteer spotlight

**M**ike and Elaine Berrena have deep roots as Tides volunteers. They have busy lives, a big family and even bigger hearts to serve their community.



Mike's involvement in Tides dates back nearly a decade and began with a connection (through a friend) to the founders of Tides. As a grieving parent himself, having lost his son in 1996, he had been involved with a group specifically geared toward grieving parents—eventually serving as a facilitator. One of the best things about finding Tides was its openness to all grieving members of the family.

"I wish my kids would have had something like Tides when they were grieving the loss of their brother," Mike says.

Elaine joined Mike by giving time as a volunteer at weekend and holiday events when her work schedule allowed, and since "retiring" (in the still very busy with several part-time commitments sense) she has joined Mike as a co-facilitator for Tides nights. She brings with her a wealth of experience in wellness and meditation, which are highly applicable skills as a facilitator. They have led to a greater sense of calmness and relaxation among participants.

"When we co-facilitate, I can back off and let her start the program with breathing and a little bit of meditation... I've seen the difference in our group," Mike says.

Mike and Elaine both cite the safety

of the group built on a foundation of family and extended family bereavement as one of the primary reasons it serves members so well and the reason they remain involved after so many years. "What's said here, stays here" provides the safety members need to share their real life situations and emotions with each other.

"Almost all of the participants I have talked to, whether they are children or grieving parents, everyone says they feel safe. It's a place where they just feel at ease, comfortable, they can say what they want. And the other participants understand and accept them for who they are and where they're at," says Elaine.

"We treasure that as a group," Mike

adds. Mike's devotion to the group comes from his personal connection, a firm belief in its relevance and a love for people. Elaine's from a desire to help others manage difficult seasons in their life and balance it with joy. Together, they bring a kindred longevity to Tides nights and events.

"I love doing anything that is going to promote well-being for other human beings. Anything that's going to help someone manage their life and learn new skills," Elaine says. "We all know that suffering is a part of life and just figuring out ways to manage that and to balance it out with joy and love and care... when we practice those pleasant emotions, it promotes our own well-being."

**355+ packages**



delivered to Tides kids and families since the start of the pandemic



**Hosted** Tides meetings  
**120+** virtually for children and adults

Over **275**  
**volunteer hours**



**\$96K+ Raised**  
from  
**202 donors**  
allowing Tides to  
continue our services



**115+ participants**

20 hours of community education reaching

**300+**  
students and individuals



**4** SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

**SAVE THE DATES** **MAY 11 & Y 12 2021**

**Centre gives**

**10 Years of Supporting One Another**

# haircuts, ice cream, and some mischief

“Grief is, unfortunately, something that connects everyone at different times in our life.”

**K**risty Bryan and her son, Max, are an upbeat duo with a great sense of humor. As a single mom, Kristy recognizes their relationship as being especially close. Thanks to her local family, Max has also benefited from having his grandparents as a regular part of his life—whether for a movie night, a ride to school or an extended visit, their presence has been a constant for Max and Kristy.

Last year brought challenges for millions. Kristy and Max are no exception, though their hardest challenges came outside of the worldwide pandemic. They are now trying to find their own “new normal”—a normal that omits a crucial piece of their family puzzle.

Peter Romaine—known also as “Pop Pop” and “Sneaky Pete”—left behind his biggest fans in June 2020. After a battle with brain cancer ending with six weeks on hospice, he passed away in his home. At that time, restrictions in place because of the pandemic were just beginning to loosen and the family was able to have an in-person viewing, funeral and burial to say goodbye.

Max feels the loss of his grandfather deeply. “Pop Pop” was a father-figure for Max and when he passed away, Max remembers “feeling sad inside



him,” though it took a few days for the tears to catch up. Since then, Max has cried many tears grieving his grandfather.

Kristy and Max have implemented a three-color system to help Max communicate how he’s feeling. Gray days are hard and sad, green is normal and yellow is a really good day. Max has been having more gloomy and gray days since the holidays passed. And as Kristy is navigating the loss of her father for both herself and Max, she has been his advocate, support and listening ear. She encourages him to find others with whom he can openly share his feelings, which is where Tides came into the family’s story.

“I’m a huge believer in utilizing as many resources as possible. I didn’t know how I would cope, much less my child,” Kristy says. “Max can be a worrier... I wanted him to have safe place beyond me.”

And that is exactly what they found in Tides.

“Tides makes me feel safe,” Max says. “Everyone there is nice and they’re funny. They’re [people] who you feel like you just wanna chill and be a friend with them... And it’s nice cause someone gets what you’re going through cause you lost someone and they get it, because they lost someone, too,” says Max—also mentioning the benefit of having someone to talk to other than his mom and grandma.

When Kristy reached out to Tides, she not only found a safe place for her son, but she also gave herself a lifeline. Because Tides offers support for the whole family with groups for children and adults, Kristy is able to join the adult parent loss group and have time where she’s able to focus on working through her own grief.

“Grief can be really lonely,” Kristy acknowledges. “From my personal

perspective, the one thing that can really get you through is ... not sitting there alone with that emotion... Grief is, unfortunately, something that connects everyone at different times in our life. There’s such power in other people who get that without having to say a lot... And, as a parent, it’s providing something I can’t provide for my child. While I’m taking care of me, it’s taking care of him, too.”

Losing a dad and a grandfather was especially difficult for Kristy and Max because he took on such an important role in their lives. He filled in many places a father typically would, including boys’ haircut day and an introduction to scary movies. Boys’ haircut day meant visiting one of Pop Pop’s friends for a haircut (complete with lollipop) and some Meyer Dairy ice cream. As for the introduction to scary movies...

“Pop Pop was a little mischievous,” Max says. “He would let me watch horror movies. Tons of scary movies. I love them!”

His mother’s forlorn confirmation shed light on Pop Pop’s second alias, “Sneaky Pete”. (Perhaps Pop Pop knew Chuckie wouldn’t have been her first choice for a Friday night flick!) Nonetheless, Peter’s mischief-making and haircut days with his grandson reveal the heart of a man who loved his grandson deeply, and that absence is felt every day.

Whether he was known as Peter, “Pop Pop” or “Sneaky Pete”, he is a man both remembered and missed by the family left behind—all of whom affectionately remember him for his kindness, bravery and love for his family.

“He loved people,” Kristy says. “He believed in giving back. He was huge into making sure the community was taken care of. I think he’d be really proud of us for reaching out for help and will want us to pay it forward at some point, too. I know he’d be happy that we have people to talk to.”



## a partnership making a difference



**W**hen Koch Funeral Home opened its doors in downtown State College in 1913, it was ahead of its time. During an era when funerals were primarily held in churches or the home of the

deceased, Harry Koch and his wife, Margaret, brought a piece of big-city life to the rural roads of State College. Cities were the only place you would find separate funeral homes, but the Koch family saw an unmet need in State College and were able to start a business that celebrated its 100 year anniversary in 2013.

Any small business owner will agree that reaching a 100 year anniversary is an enormous feat. It takes hard work, deep motivation and a skilled workers—and it deserves to be celebrated.

Current Koch Funeral Home owners Glenn Fleming and Tom Brown sought to do something for their community in celebration, and after a short conversation, Tides was the planned recipient of a significant contribution.

“We wanted to have someone be the beneficiary of some money and it wasn’t a hard choice. It was Tides,” Glenn says. “And there really wasn’t much of a discussion, it was an easy choice.”

The partnering of a grief support organization with a funeral home was

a natural one, but it wasn’t the only reason Tides was selected. Glenn had heard of Tides in its very early days and has participated in Tides over the years. He highly valued their support of children and it led him to be involved in various ways over the years, including as a volunteer in the early days. Over the years, they expanded into supporting grieving adults and family members in addition to children, and Glenn spent some time at Tides nights after his wife passed in 2014.

“I’m really proud of them for doing what they’re doing,” Glenn says. To show their support, Glenn and Tom created an endowment through the Centre Foundation with Tides as the beneficiary.

With the help of the Tides Angels (a group of individual supporters) who fulfilled pledges totaling \$50,000 in 2019, the Koch Funeral Home match brought the total raised to over \$100,000. Through this endowment fund, Tides will continue to receive on-going financial support each year.

“I’m just so proud of the organization for growing the way it has. It’s great to have them in this small town.”

### A Special Thank You to Our Tides Angels

Henry & Jacqui Chiarkas,  
Home Edge Realty

Bob Flayhart &  
Lynn Litow Flayhart

James & Doreen Glenning

John & Carol Graham

Steve & Cathy Hurvitz

John & Carol Kelly

John & Michelle Mason

Larry & Molly Snavely

7 Joseph & Rebecca Zavacky

## new initiative

Tides was founded with the mission of bringing safe, nurturing, and nonjudgmental support to children and adolescents in the Centre Region. Over the past seventeen years, Tides has been providing this kind of support to families. Now, in hope and anticipation of continuing this support and meeting a grieving child where he or she is, Tides is launching the new initiative, WAVES OF CARE.

The goal of this program is to surround children of all ages with the support they need and desire in all aspects of their lives: at home, with their peers, at school, and in the community.



**Home** | Tides is providing resources, reference guides, and books for both children and the adults caring for them. These resources help provide support, information, and direction on how to best care for those impacted by a death.

**Community** | By educating and bringing awareness of the impact grief has on a child, we can build a community of advocacy and support for children whose lives have indefinitely changed after a death.

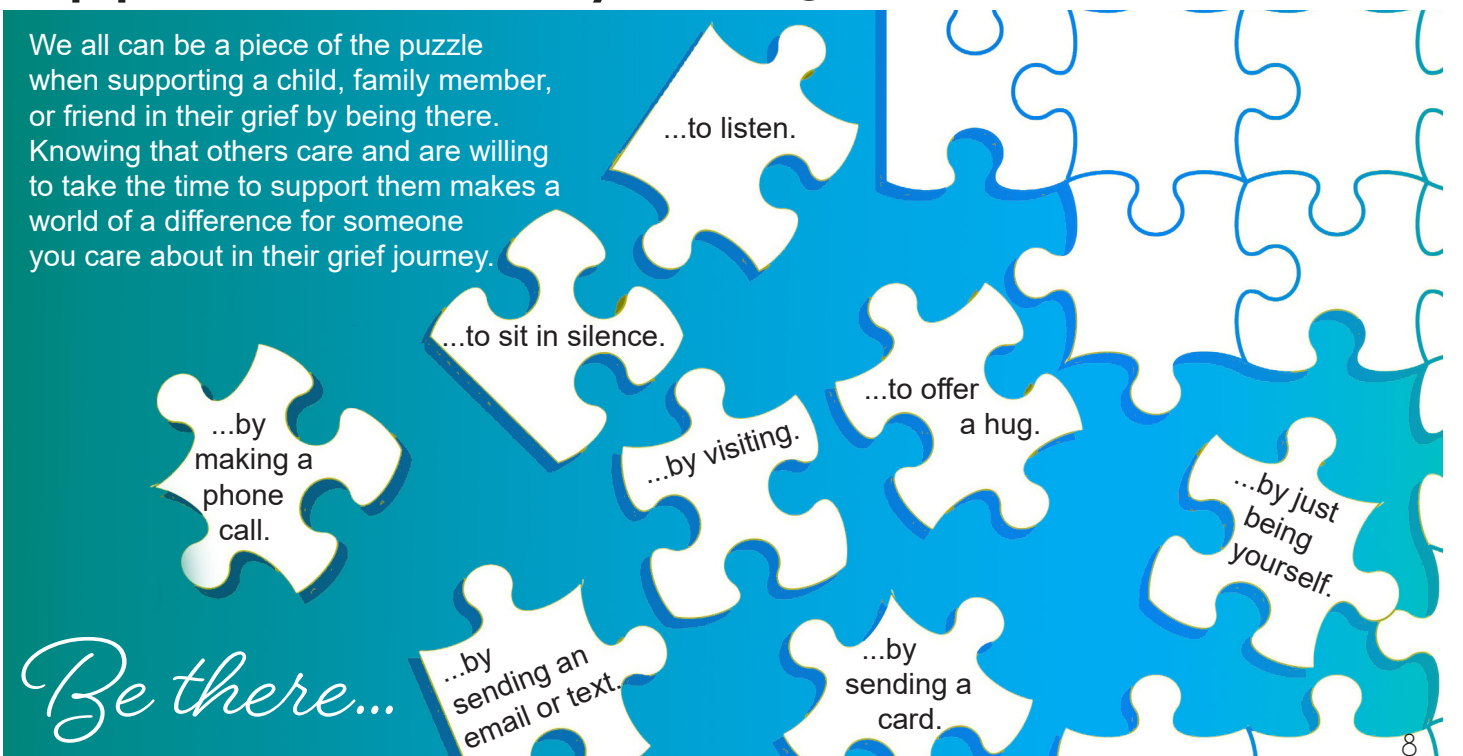
Tides is connecting with healthcare groups, schools, and other direct care organizations to advocate for children and surround them with the care and support they need.

**School** | Tides provides grief education, information, and resources to school faculty and staff so that they can best support grieving students. In addition, we respond immediately after a death impacts a school by providing opportunity for students and faculty to connect and share with one another.

**Peers** | Tides continues to offer peer support groups for children of all ages. Support groups are a meaningful way for children and adolescents to connect with others their age who are also living a new normal due to the death of someone they loved. Groups create new bonds and help children to know they are not alone in their journey.

## support a friend by being there...

We all can be a piece of the puzzle when supporting a child, family member, or friend in their grief by being there. Knowing that others care and are willing to take the time to support them makes a world of a difference for someone you care about in their grief journey.



*Be there...*

# thank you to our 2020 community partners

A Mindful Village	Giant Food Store, Northland Center	Sample Media
Alliance for G.O.O.D.	The Hamer Foundation	Shamrock Appraisal and Consulting Services
Amazon Smile	Highmark Blue Shield	Snavelly Associates
Arm Group	Jana Marie Foundation	State College Area School District
Axemann Brewery	Joseph T. Berrena Mechanicals	State College Orthodontics
Centre 1st Bank, a division of Old Dominion National Bank	KBB and the richards   stover group	State College Rotary
Centre County United Way	Kish Bank	Toftrees Resort & Conference Center
Centre Foundation	Kiwanis Club of State College	Trader Joes
Colonial Press	Koch Funeral Home	Trombley Real Estate
Diamonds & Lace Bridal Boutique	Kristen Coombs Financial Advisors	University Baptist & Brethren Church
First Citizens Community Bank	M&T Bank	Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1600
First National Bank	McQuaide Blasko, Inc.	WPSU Penn State
Forever Media	Pam Asencio, Grace and Heart	WTAJ-10
Frost & Conn, Inc.	RE/Max Centre Realty, Eric Hurvitz	
Geisinger	Restek	

# make an impact

We are incredibly thankful for the generosity and support of the community. Tides is able to continue the much needed grief support, education, and outreach to children, adults, and families because of the amazing volunteers, donors, supporters, and friends who believe in our mission.

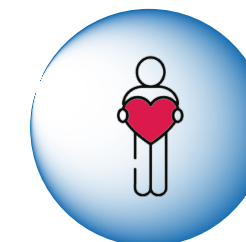
## Help Tides support our community



### Connect

We love hearing from you!

Please contact with us if you see an opportunity where Tides can provide support, bring education to a group or organization, or if you would like to share your family's story.



### Volunteer

Tides relies on the expertise and caring nature of our wonderful volunteers. Without these amazing people, Tides would not be able to provide the level of support to children and adults who are grieving the death of someone they hold dear.

We have volunteer opportunities available for direct and indirect support of the children and families we serve.



### Donate

Every donation means the world to Tides. We are a privately funded organization who relies on the financial support of individuals and businesses in our community.

Consider making an ongoing monthly donation to help Tides continue supporting families throughout the year.

Gifts of any size mean so much to us as we strive to provide the best level of support to our families.

Visit [tidesprogram.org/give](https://tidesprogram.org/give) to donate online.

All services provided by Tides are offered at no-cost. We are able to continue support and outreach because of the kindness and generosity of our community.

education crisis support referrals resources  
**OUTREACH**  
**GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS**  
 community response  
 partnerships

The M&T Bank and Charitable Foundation strive to provide community support to local organizations who serve and help improve the lives of individuals and families.

Tides is no stranger to the ongoing generosity M&T provides. Knowing the importance grief support has on the mental health of children and adults, they have continued to support Tides over the past twelve years as we serve grieving families in our area.

We are incredibly grateful for their ongoing support. To date, they have donated \$43,600, providing hope to grieving families in our area.

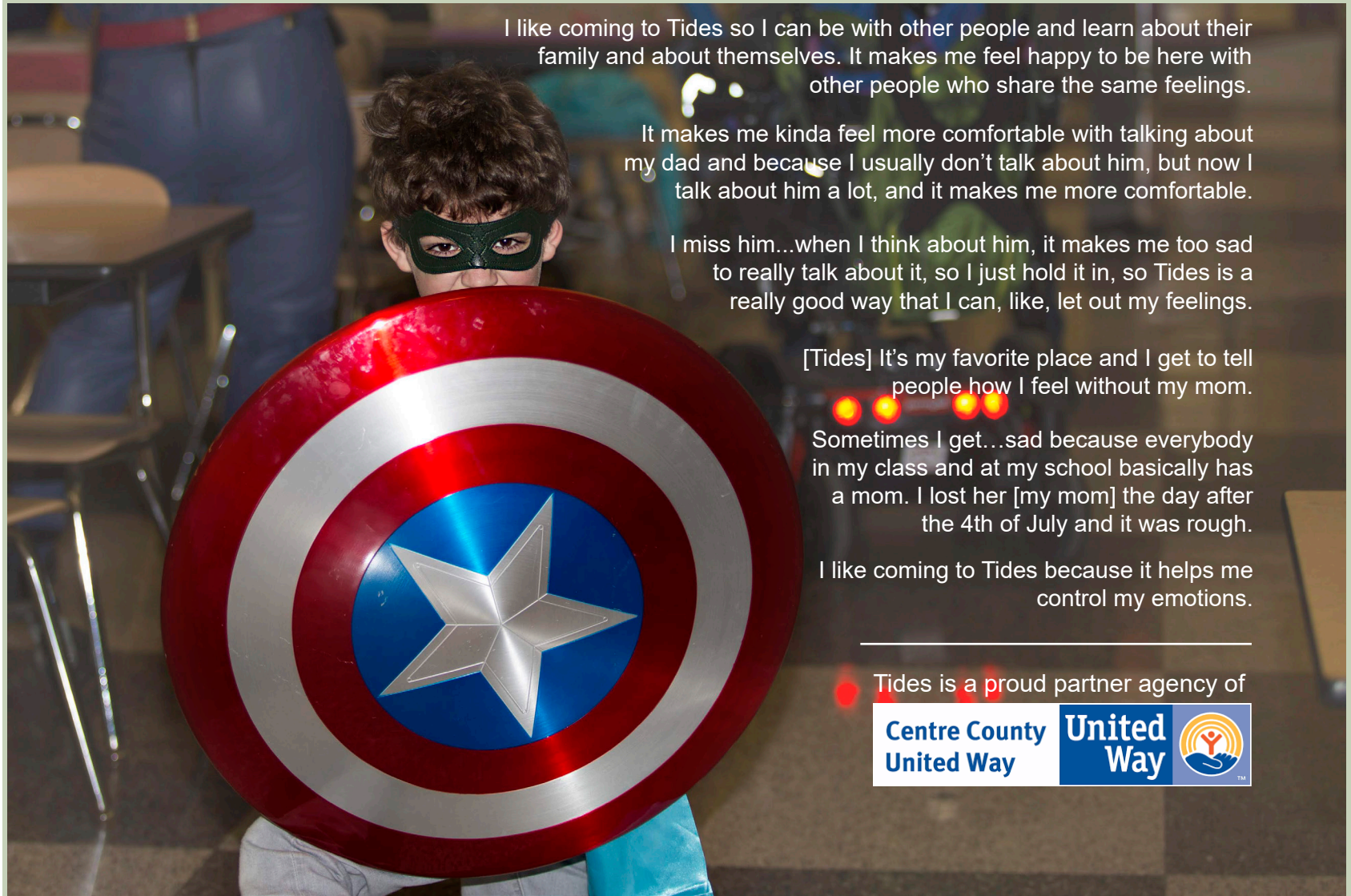


Holly Oxendale (L), Tina Powers, M&T Bank (R)



P.O. Box 1251 • State College, PA 16804

A few words from our young superheros who continue to inspire us with their strength...



I like coming to Tides so I can be with other people and learn about their family and about themselves. It makes me feel happy to be here with other people who share the same feelings.

It makes me kinda feel more comfortable with talking about my dad and because I usually don't talk about him, but now I talk about him a lot, and it makes me more comfortable.

I miss him...when I think about him, it makes me too sad to really talk about it, so I just hold it in, so Tides is a really good way that I can, like, let out my feelings.

[Tides] It's my favorite place and I get to tell people how I feel without my mom.

Sometimes I get...sad because everybody in my class and at my school basically has a mom. I lost her [my mom] the day after the 4th of July and it was rough.

I like coming to Tides because it helps me control my emotions.

Tides is a proud partner agency of

Centre County  
United Way

