

# Helping Families with Traumatic and Sudden Death

## **Program Description:**

Dealing with traumatic or sudden death is difficult for everyone including those who serve them in a helping capacity. This program is designed to help those who work with the grieving be more effective when they are working with people who are faced with the traumatic or sudden unexpected death of a loved one.

We will explore the different issues families have to deal with because a death is the result of a trauma and what other factors affect their ability to cope. In addition, the process of grief will be examined and how you will learn how heightened emotion decrease the capacity to cope and why the need for information is so important.

We will focus on communication skills and how it needs to be different because of the circumstances surrounding the death. Participants will learn the need for clarity in direction and the need to provide options because of the overwhelming emotion involved when working with this type of family.

In addition, you will learn how to help the family develop rituals that will allow them to say goodbye and move toward a new reality and a new identity for themselves.

## **Program Format:**

Interactive Lecture format (2 fifty minute segments – with one 15 minute break)

## **Program Elements:**

### **1<sup>st</sup> 50 minutes**

- Understanding the differences in grief when the death is traumatic or sudden grief
- Emotional and physical reactions of the traumatized griever
- Variables that impact the grief response when the death is traumatic
- Coping Capacity of the traumatized griever

### **2<sup>nd</sup> 50 minutes**

- Communication skills needed for the traumatized griever
- Effective listening skills
- Need for clarity of information
- How to help and what you can say
- Rituals of Goodbye

## **Objectives:**

Participants will learn and be able to identify and describe:

- At Least three variables that compound grief when the death has been traumatic or sudden
- How communication needs to be different when working with traumatized grievers
- At least two variables that impact the grievers ability to cope
- At least three ways they can more effectively communicate with families who have been traumatized
- At least three issues that interfere with effective listening
- At least three coping strategies that will help traumatized grievers
- At least three techniques for providing information clearly and concisely
- At least three ways to help families with goodbye rituals