

**Community Grants Program  
Grant Report**



1594 Esmeralda Avenue  
Minden, Nevada 89423

[www.douglascountynv.gov](http://www.douglascountynv.gov)  
775-782-9821

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Agency Name: Douglas Center for Hope and Healing

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Contact: Amanda Johnson Title: Executive Director

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Phone: 775-450-0329 Email: [Amanda.johnson3@ymail.com](mailto:Amanda.johnson3@ymail.com)

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Project Name: Camp Hope & SchoolSupport

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Grant Funding Amount: \$12.312

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Project Completion Date: July 22, 2023

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Describe how the funds were used to serve Douglas County residents.

The Douglas County Community Grant Funds for 22-23 were used to fund Training, Lending Library, and Grief Awareness and Educations.

**TRAINING**

The Center for Hope and Healing provides grief support through support groups, school-based support, Camp Hope, Home Visits and Community Outreach. Continuing and advancing our education on death and dying and grief services enables us to keep up to date on the newest trends, research and techniques available. In June 2023 with funds from the Douglas County Community Grant we sent 4 volunteers and facilitators to the National Alliance for Children’s Grief Conference in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. “The National Alliance for Children’s Grief (NACG) Symposium is the longest-running and most comprehensive Childhood Bereavement Symposium offered in the United States. The NACG Symposium draws more than 400 children’s grief support professionals and volunteers rom a variety of organizations through and outside the United States each year.”

In addition to attending the NACG Symposium our Executive Director and one volunteer completed the Dougy Center Online Training Course. Utilizing online training courses is a great way to get up to date training for those unable to travel for training.

**LENDING LIBRARY**

We were able to update our lending library and purchase 81 new books for our library and included material for children, teens, adults and grief facilitators. These books will be available for participants of the center as well as the community including DCSD counselors and teachers. These materials are a great way for parents/guardians, teachers or counselors to assist in explaining death and coping skills to children. They also allow teens and adults to continue exploring their perspective on grief at home and relate to the stories, trials and tribulations of others who have had losses.

In addition, we were able to purchase 480 new Grief & Loss Pamphlets, these pamphlets are educational and motivational and are on specific types of loss. We include these loss specific pamphlets in all of our grief journals.



**GRIEF AWARENESS AND EDUCATION**

Educating our community is an ongoing process and we are overwhelmed with the amount of awareness we were able to create this year. Through our grant we were able to create informational packets and deliver them to school counselors, teachers, principals and local health care providers. We were excited to physically get in front of more school personnel and community members through our Hot Air for Hope Balloon Festival Event in May, this event helped us disseminate information to people who had never heard of the Center for Hope and Healing.

Describe how the organization measured the success of the program/project. Provide qualitative and quantitative measures.

The Center for Hope and Healing collected qualitative and quantitative measures for the purposes of this grant.

**GOALS & OUTCOMES 22-23**

GOAL	DATA SOURCE/ COLLECTION	RESULTS	TESTIMONIALS/ACTIVITIES
Send 4 Facilitators to NACG Conference in Pittsburg	Qualitative Testimonials	The following 4 Facilitators Attended *Telsche Hipple, Youth Outreach and Camp Coordinator, Board Member and Group Facilitator *Theresa Tutton, Adult Group Facilitator and Camp Facilitator *Jackie Smith, Adult Group Facilitator and Board Member *Dori Draper, Adult and Teen Group Facilitator	<b>See Testimonials Below Chart</b>
2 Administrative Volunteers to Attend Dougy Center Training	Qualitative Testimonials	The following Facilitators Attended *Telsche Hipple, Youth Outreach and Camp Coordinator, Board Member and Group Facilitator *Amanda Johnson, Executive Director and Kids Group Facilitator	<b>See Testimonials Below Chart</b>

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<p>Acquire 143 New books, journals and pamphlets for the Resource Library. Acquire new resources at NACG Book Store</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>The Center for Hope and Healing aquired: *81 New Books on grief and loss including literature for lending to children, teens and adults. *480 New Care Note: Grief and Loss Pamphlets in English and Spanish on all types of losses ranging from "Losing Your Mother," "Losing a Spouse," "Losing a Grandparent," "When a Parent Dies."</p>	<p>The Center for Hope and Healing provides a free resource library to participants of support groups as well as DCSD Schools and Community Groups. When a loss happens we are able to provide literature to classrooms for teachers to use to help explain to children what has happened. It is also a way for participants at the center to continue exploring their perspective on grief at home beyond group. In addition we provide grief pamphlets on specific types of loss in all of our grief backpacks.</p>
<p>Grief Awareness/Education</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>*Provided updated services and literature materials to... *28 Douglas County School District School Counselors/Social Workers at one of their monthly school counselor meetings. *Updated Principals of all DCSD Schools on our program and services through the Hot Air for Hope Balloon Festival. *Spoke to Douglash High School Freshman Class, all Carson Valley Middle School and Pau Wa Lu Middle School Students as well as Gardnerville Elementary, Scarcelli, CC Meneley, Jacks Valley, Pinion Hills and Minden Elementary Schools about what CHH does through the Hot Air for Hope Balloon Outreach Program. *Disseminated Information to Carson Valley Health and Carson Tahoe Health and Douglas County Social Services</p>	<p><b>Samples of Information Disseminated Attached.</b></p>



**JACKIE SMITH, BOARD MEMBER, CENTER FOR HOPE AND HEALING**

**NACG TESTIMONIAL**

Thank you for allowing me to attend the NACG conference this past June in Pittsburgh, PA. I was happy to be able to attend sessions and workshops that directly impact my role specifically within the Center for Hope and Healing as a board member and co-facilitator. I was also fortunate enough to attend some sessions that gave me continuing education credits. Not only did this conference support my needs as a volunteer it also supported some professional goals for me as well. The information I received during the conference also helps me working with children at my school with grief and the multitude of emotions and issues that come hand in hand with that. The conference provided a lot of information on children's literature as it related to grief, something that I can use across the board. Additionally, several of the sessions available that I attended focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion, something that is also a large focus in my professional career as well as a focus for our center and our outreach.

The next handful of sessions that I attended focused on my role as a board member. I was able to attend a Non-Profit Leadership lab where we brainstormed with other leaders on specific focus topics in a gallery type session. I also attended sessions regarding volunteers, how to find, keep & grow your volunteer base. I attended sessions as they related to outreach into the community-again this tying into my focus of diversity, equity & inclusion. Other sessions were focused on fundraising and these were extremely helpful to bring back ideas and information from other grief support centers and how they operate financially. Additionally we were also able to have a tour of the Highmark Caring Place. I was fortunate to see how a vision can be turned into reality if you have the resources and support in your community. We also met with representatives from our western regions to network and discuss regional issues in grief support such as reaching Native populations and isolation of rural communities. Many other sessions were filled with ideas and solutions how to service grieving families. These were invaluable as it was so enriching to hear what other grief centers are doing and what is possible for our center when we are working with children and families.

My notes are extensive. If you need more specific information, please let me know. Thank you again for an amazing opportunity.

**THERESA TUTTON, ADULT GROUP FACILITATOR, CENTER FOR HOPE AND HEALING**



## NACG TESTIMONIAL

### SUMMARY/TAKEAWAYS:

- Importance of adult relationships for children who are grieving
- Huge negative mental health impact on children during the pandemic
  - o 54% increase in alcohol consumption
  - o 262% increase in online alcohol sales
  - o 40% increase in marijuana use
- Massive increase in US children on Social Security Disability due to mental illness:
  - o In 1987 it was 5%, in 2007 it was 50% and in 2017 it was 73% (OK, this sounds absurd, but this is what they said)
- How camps can be an excellent intervention for kids and tons of outdoor games to play to help grief process
- Rural communities:
  - o 20% of US population is rural
  - o Only 7% of Masters of Social Work graduates work in rural areas (Primarily it's Bachelors or Primary Care Providers that are providing mental health support)
  - o 50% higher suicide risk and increasing
  - o Big threat of more hospitals closing
  - o More likely to be given medication for grief
  - o Much higher levels of sickness, including excessive drinking, smoking and obesity
  - o Deaths are higher in rural areas of all top 10 causes: heart disease, cancer, accidents, substance abuse (particularly synthetic fentanyl)
  - o Other online supports
- Why grief inventories (used by mental health professionals for diagnosing) are extremely skewed and other ways to measure grief for children
- 1 in 12 kids in the US experience the death of a sibling or parent
- Don't assume a death is a "loved one". Use "person who died".
- HUGE increase in **substance deaths**:
  - o From 2019 – 2020 there was a 31% increase in substance related deaths (most common age of death 25-44)
  - o Opioid use typically starts from surgery
  - o Disclosing the cause of death (e.g. specific substance) helps grief process and has better mental health outcomes
  - o Substance death is often the final tragedy in a series of heartbreaks
  - o Ensure death is told to the child by a responsible adult
  - o Use disease model for addiction (like cancer)
    - § "Daddy had a brain disease that caused him to make choices that were unsafe"
    - § "This is the consequence of taking too much medicine that makes their body stop working"
    - § "Mommy had a sickness that caused her a lot of pain and she didn't know how to make the pain stop"



- o Be mindful that some people say that Fentanyl deaths are homicide which can be confusing for children, particularly if they purchased drugs laced with Fentanyl
- Maintain routine for children (which creates comfort) with some flexibility to their needs
- Sharp increase in foster care placements and grandparents taking care of children (ready for retirement but then have to take care of their grandchildren)
- Kids ask for help in the most unloving ways
- Kids often grieve in spurts because they can't tolerate the pain
- What kids may think about a substance death:
  - o Is my family bad?
  - o Could I have done something differently?
  - o Was it my fault?
  - o They didn't love me enough to stop
  - o They picked drugs over me
- Be as honest as possible with children – or they'll fill in the blanks with much worse (graphic details aren't needed). Lay a foundation of truth for trust
- SUPPORT GROUPS: Do 8-week session and encourage members to connect afterwards. Also have an open-ended one. Perhaps different timelines (acute, less than 2 years, more than 2 years?). Zoom great for accessibility.
- The PROCESS is the importance of any active grief activities
- Have goals (eg; feeling identification, coping skills, building connections, emotional regulation etc)
- Explored pros and cons of Camp Erin: Good if you're starting from scratch, but you have to do it their way and not much room for creativity.
  - o Corrie@corriesirota.com: Camp Erin had 48 camps, now 30-something. Organizations drop out because there are too many rules. Good template as to what to do. No financial support.
- Adults allow 2-3 months for others to grieve but it takes 6-10 years to cope
- Dual process in grief intervention: BOTH loss-oriented AND restoration (moving on). Going back and forth
- Increase in using factual cause of death in obituaries (e.g. suicide and substances), but burden shouldn't be on family to do this
- Negative implications to children whose sibling is sick:
  - o 7 Xs higher depression rates
  - o Higher chance of using substances
  - o Lower self-esteem
  - o Higher internalizing and externalizing behaviors
- Positive implications to children whose sibling is sick:
  - o Kinder
  - o More compassionate
  - o Increased maturity
  - o More tolerant
  - o Motivated



**I HOPE TO BRING BACK TO DOUGLAS COUNTY CITIZENS:**

- A greater understanding of how various types of grief impacts a child (and adults) and specific interventions to assist them that are age-appropriate
- More ideas/interventions to implement for camps that are age-specific/appropriate
- Book recommendations that may be utilized for a grief support group book club
- New ways to implement support groups (i.e. the consensus was that time-limited groups are more effective than open-ended)
- Possibility of having various loss support groups (e.g. young widows, parents who have lost children etc)
- How to talk to kids more openly about death and grief, particularly around substance abuse deaths
- How to more effectively measure grief in children (vs inventories)
- A way to serve Spanish speakers and Native American Indians
- Other ways for citizens to access grief support online

**BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- "Kai's Journey"
- "Lost in the Middle" (middle schoolers)
- "Saving Normal" by Alan Francis, MD
- "The Empty Room" by Elizabeth Devita-Raeburn
- "The Invisible String" by Patrice Karst (for siblings)
- "The Next Place" by Warren Hanson
- "Finding the Right Words" by Cindy Weinstein

**Day 1 highlights:**

- Plenary Fred Rogers Institute. Dr Margaret McFarland.
- "when you look for the helpers you'll find hope"
- "Sadness isn't forever"
- Bend with the gusty winds
- Kids do better when there's at least one stable relationship
- We are more than just one thing
- Grow human interactions with kids, families and helpers
- Camp Erin

**Day 2 highlights:**

- "NACG Grief Games Adventure Therapy" (have documents in OneDrive)
- Rural: Utilize churches for additional support, online groups for lack of transport/childcare issues
- Camp Cardinal (see NACG Camp Cardinal note for slides)

**Day 3 highlights:**

- Sibling bereavement
- 40% increase in (child) mental health hospital admissions during pandemic



**TELSCHÉ HIPPLE, BOARD MEMBER, CENTER FOR HOPE AND HEALING**

**NACG TESTIMONIAL**

I gathered a lot of new ideas for activities base off great children’s grief books that we can easily and readily bring to the center.

Learned meaningful ideas, rituals, to implement at camp next year.

Learned how to identify kids who have experienced trama with their loss and ways to productively work with them and meet them where they are in their grief process.

Discovered resources to potentially use with all levels of support groups. Thanks for the opportunity to learn, grow and network at the conference.

**AMANDA JOHNSON, BOARD MEMBER, CENTER FOR HOPE AND HEALING**

**DOUGY CENTER TESTIMONIAL**

The Dougy Center Training is incredibly informative and is held as the gold standard in grief and loss education, second only to their in person training, the online training was excellent. The Center for Hope and Healing operates on the Dougy Center Model and has done this for the past 12 years. When Co-Founder Emilio Parga helped start CHH he trained us on the Dougy Center Model, it was great to finally have this training delivered directly from them. The updated information on grief and loss was great. The Dougy Center training covers the ten core principles of grief-informed practice, grief myths and misconceptions and grief support for all age groups including young children, children, teens, young adults, parents and caregivers.

Provide any changes or challenges to the original project plan and how it affected the project.

A lofty goal we had for this grant was to rewrite our training manual following the trainings with the National Alliance for Children’s Grief and the Dougy Center Training. With the vast amount of information that our four participants came back with and needed to weed through when they returned from the conference June 17, 2023 we are just now scratching the surface of creating a new training manual. We underestimated the amount of time that it would take to create this new training manual, however we are thrilled with how this is taking shape and we can’t wait to finish it in the coming month and train some new volunteers.





## SUPPORT

The Center for Hope and Healing is a reality because of the support from our generous community. Please help us continue to provide FREE grief resources to children, teens, adults and their families. Your donations directly benefit local children and teens.

### HOW CAN YOU HELP??

#### Volunteer!

- We are in need of passionate volunteers to help in many ways.

#### Attend A Fundraiser

- Throughout the year we host several fundraisers. Watch our social media or website for dates and times.

#### Shop at Smiths Food & Drug

- Create and/or sign-into your smithsfoodanddrug.com account, click on your name, go to account summary, then Community Rewards Enroll, type in Douglas Center for Hope and Healing and click Enroll.

#### Donate

- Sponsor a room at our facility.
- Paypal donations can be made on our website
- Check out our WISH LIST on our website
- Donations can be sent to:  
1528 Hwy 395 S., Ste 235  
Gardnerville, NV 89410

The Douglas Center for Hope and Healing is a Nevada 501c3 nonprofit organization.  
[info@douglascenterforhopeandhealing.org](mailto:info@douglascenterforhopeandhealing.org)

This brochure was made possible by the generous grant from.

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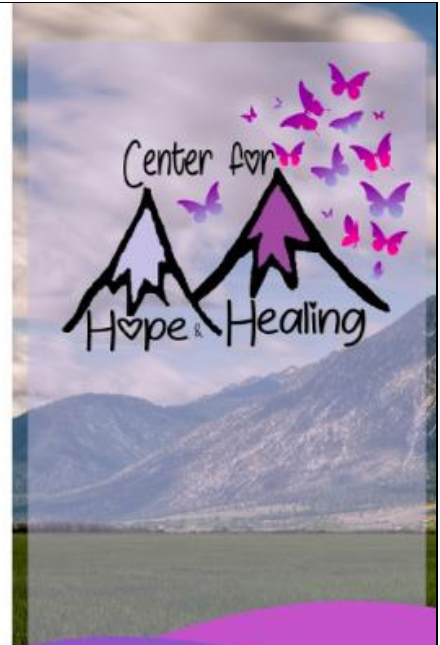
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*A Resource Center for  
Grieving  
Children, Teen & Families*



# HOPE

# AND

# HEALING

## OUR MISSION

For the past 11 years, the Center for Hope and Healing has: Provided a place for children, teens, and adults, who have experienced the death of a loved one, to safely explore their perspectives on grief, understand responses to loss and develop strategies for coping, communicating and healing in a healthy manner.

## SERVICES

- SUPPORT GROUPS
- SCHOOL BASED SUPPORT GROUPS
- CAMP HOPE
- GRIEF BACKPACKS
- GRIEF AWARENESS
- EDUCATION & TRAINING
- HOME VISITS



# SUPPORT

"The Center for Hope and Healing helped me through the tough time of grief as a kid when my dad passed away and taught me it's OK to be sad."

~Jordan, age 15

## PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

Peer support groups are open-ended and free of charge; participants may join in at any time and decide their length of participation.

There is no timeline for grief.

- **CHILDREN:** Grades K-6 explore their grief through activities, art and play.
- **TEENS:** Grades 7-12 engage in discussions and activities exploring their grief and loss.
- **ADULTS:** Explore their experienced with grief while relating to others who have experience a loss.

# HONOR



## HOPE & HEALING

After a death, grieving children and teens must make their way in a world marked by intense sadness, loneliness, and emptiness. Eventually, feelings of loss including anger, guilt, resentment, fear, social withdrawal and depression may surface in unhealthy, unresolved ways in the weeks, months, and even years following a death. The Center for Hope and Healing will give children and their families many opportunities for developing coping skills, sharing, and self expression in healthy, positive ways.

# SHARE



## How can you help a grieving friend?

Someone you know has experienced the death of a loved one. You want to help, but you aren't sure how.

**What do you say? What do you do?**

### Do Say:

"I'm sad to hear that..."  
(your dad died, you are having a hard time, etc.)

"If you want to talk about what happened, I'm here to listen."

"How can I be helpful, or what do you need today?"

"I can sit with you even if you don't feel like talking."

"Tell me about what's going on."  
(I have a genuine interest and be willing to listen.)

"I can't imagine how hard this must be for you."

"I'm not sure what to say, but I'm here if you need a friend."

### Avoid Saying:

"I'm sorry"  
(This can sound like you are apologizing instead of expressing sorrow.)

"I know how you feel!"  
(Even if you have experienced a loss or a difficult time, each person's experience is unique.)

"You shouldn't feel that way."  
(Feelings aren't right or wrong and can't be simply turned off.)

"Try not to think about it."

Cliches like "Time heals all wounds," or "You'll be OK."  
(These can seem like you are dismissing your friend's feelings.)

"It's time to put it behind you."  
(We grieve because we love, so grief becomes a lifelong journey.)

### How to Help:

Send or drop off a gift card for dinner.

Start a meal train.

Show up and offer to watch kids or pets.

Send a card with a fond memory.

Reach out to the Center for Hope and Healing for resources or a Grief Backpack. 775.460.0329

*"A real friend is one who walks in when the rest of the world walks out."*

*-Walter Winchell*

[www.douglascenterforhopeandhealing.org](http://www.douglascenterforhopeandhealing.org)

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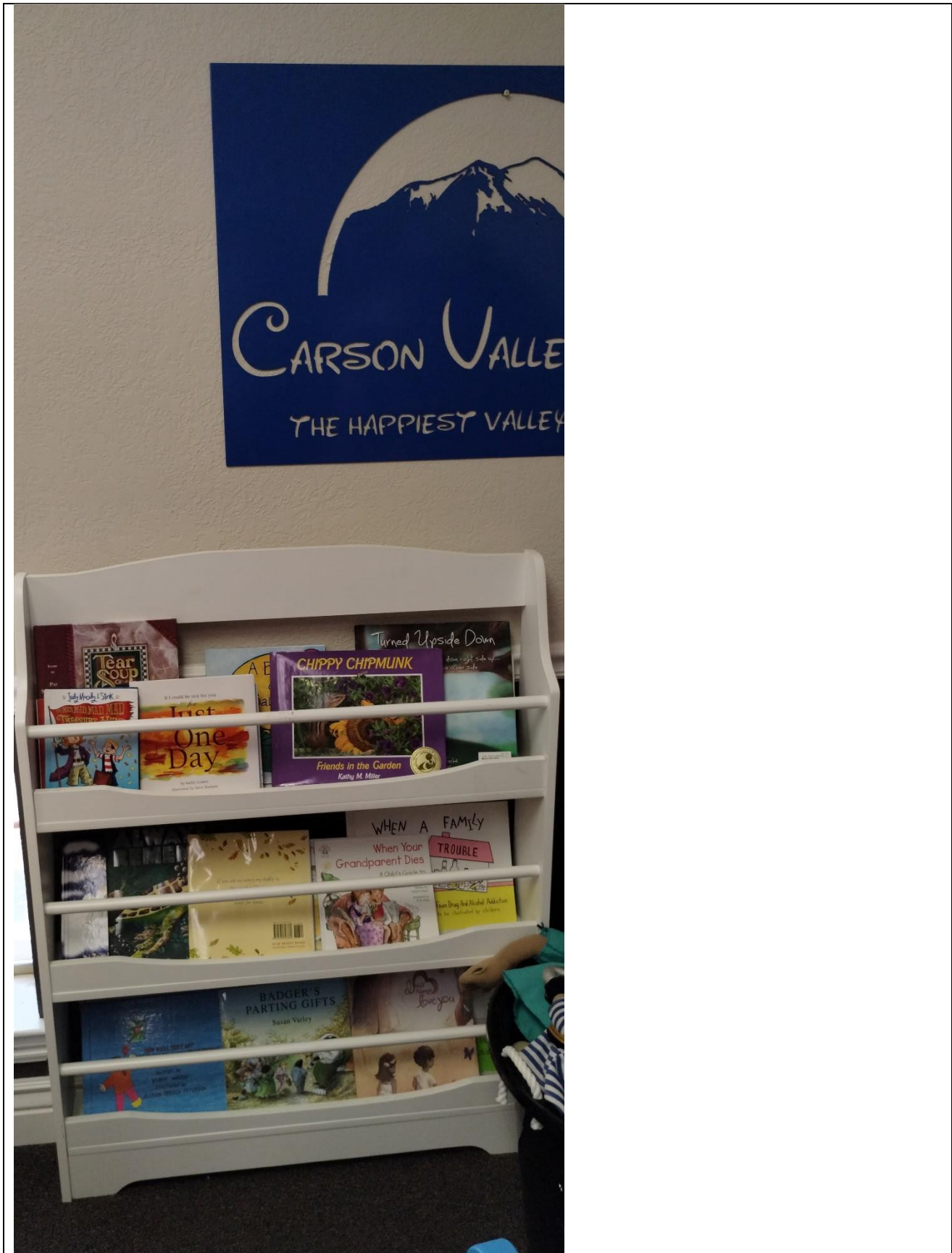


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