

**OLD TAPPAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
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**William M. Ward, Ed. D.**  
**Superintendent**

Dear Parents/Guardian:

Our community has recently experienced the loss of two parents who played important roles in the lives of many of our young people. Through their involvement in community activities, Mrs. Joan Szegda and Mr. Mike Ewen interacted with many of our middle school students for a number of years. As such, it is only natural that their passing would result in questions, uncertainty, and anxiety for some students. The death of a family member, friend, or colleague, causes many of us to struggle with our own feelings of fear and loss.

In some instances, individuals may have an immediate reaction to a loss, but others may experience the loss more intensely at a later date. Life events such as birthdays, holidays, and family celebrations may result in a greater sense of loss. Sometimes the passage of time may result in increased awareness of the finality of the situation.

Following several requests from parents for information and resources for their children or themselves, we have attempted to compile a list that may be helpful for individuals or families experiencing a loss. The list includes links to print resources, as well as potential counseling opportunities. I would like this list to be a beginning point and encourage you to forward additional suggestions. This information will be available on our website and will periodically be updated as we locate other useful information.

### **Grief/Bereavement Resources**

- Good Grief-Books, resources, etc. <http://www.good-grief.org/resources.html>
- Valley Hospice-Bereavement groups for adults and children (877-284-4441)  
<http://www.valleyhospice.org/Bereave.html>
- Hearts & Crafts Grief Counseling-Counseling, support groups, library (201-818-9939)  
<http://www.heartsandcraftscounseling.org/>
- Holy Name Medical Center-Bereavement groups (201-833-3740, x 2766)
- Rainbow Peer Support Group-Peer support for children 4 through teen at Ridgewood Y YMCA  
<http://www.ridgewoodymca.org/rainbows>
- Comfort Zone Camp-Free bereavement camp and support groups for children  
<http://www.comfortzonecamp.org/about-us>
- Bergen County Department of Human Services-Resource guide page 28
- Gilda's Club, Hackensack (cancer only) <http://www.gildasclubnj.org/>
- Grief Speaks-Bereavement support groups <http://www.griefspeaks.com/id45.html>
- Childhood Bereavement Program-Weill Cornell Medical College <http://wo-pub2.med.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/WebObjects/PublicA.woa/wa/viewService?servicesID=1463&website=wmc+psych>
- *Cancercare*- Professional support for anyone affected by cancer. <http://www.cancercare.org/>

Thank you to Ms. Bohchalian, Ms. Bogdanoff, Ms. Fusco, and Ms. Richardson for their assistance in developing this list of resources.

Sincerely,  
*William M. Ward*  
William M. Ward, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools