

***Nonprofit Chamber of Services
Nonprofit of the Week***

This series has been established with the intent of increasing awareness of the many causes and efforts taken on by our nonprofit brethren. If your nonprofit has a particular event taking place during the course of a week, an anniversary for example, please make this known and we will do all possible to accommodate a spotlight that coincides. On behalf of our membership, we wish to say “thank you” for taking a few moments from your busy schedule to learn a bit more about our community of nonprofits.

One in seven children will lose a loved one by the age of 10 and for many of them, the feelings of fear, disorientation, anger, frustration, and guilt they feel will be accompanied by a feeling of loneliness. Fortunately, there has been an organization serving the Wichita area since 2000 that is dedicated to making sure no child is left to grieve alone. Three Trees has provided a supportive, comforting environment for over 750 grieving children and their families who have experienced the death of a loved one.

Three Trees, which draws conceptually from a nation-wide network of independent centers, was inspired by a young Wichita mother and her three children who found themselves coping with the untimely death of her husband and their father in 1998. Unable to find grief support opportunities conducive to the needs of a young family in the Wichita area, the mother traveled to Kansas City. As a result, establishing a similar support opportunity in the Wichita area became the passion of four friends.

The name Three Trees is borrowed from the enchanting American folktale about three young trees, all of which have grand and special dreams. Each tree finds its dream literally cut short with the mighty swing of the woodcutter’s axe. As the tale unfolds, the trees find that their wishes do, in fact, come true in a surprising and ultimately much more meaningful way. It is the hope of Three Trees that children who have found their own dreams destroyed by the death of a loved one will find ways to cope and heal.

In addition to providing comprehensive grief support programs for children and their families in the Wichita and surrounding communities, Three Trees provides training and resource support to schools and professional and lay members of the community through community outreach and education.

Recently, two additional programs were initiated at Three Trees. *A Safe Harbor* is a program designed to help families navigate the waters of life-threatening illnesses. *From Tears to Hope* is designed to begin meeting the needs of children and their families who have lost a loved one to homicide, suicide or other traumatic means. Three Trees is committed to offering their services free of charge to all families and are supported by donations and grants.

Three Trees' Executive Director, Dr. Helen Reiner, is a licensed psychologist in the state of Kansas with over 20 years experience working with children and their families in the fields of counseling and psychotherapy.

For more information on Three Trees and their programs please visit their website at www.threetrees.org or phone them at 316.263.3335.