



National Hospice
Foundation

Committed to compassionate
care at the end of life

Caregiver and Family Resources

NHPCO's Caring Connections Program



You Can Make a Difference for Families Facing Life's Toughest Issues

By supporting NHPCO's Caring Connections program, you have the opportunity to:

- Ensure that individuals and families can talk about and plan for their end-of-life experiences.
- Help shatter myths about hospice and advance directives.
- Lead people to understand the value of hospice—and the wisdom of learning about all care choices.

What NHF Will Accomplish with Your Donation

Through Caring Connections, a lot of worried, tired, and grief-stricken people receive the right information and help during the toughest times.

Your gift will be used to:

- Keep the Caring Connections **website** up-to-date
- Staff the **Helpline**
- Conduct an annual legal review of **state-specific advance directives**.
- Create **new materials** to meet the needs of people who are planning for the end of life—or who are in the midst of challenging situations.

Caring Connections Projects in Need of Additional Funding

- **Continuing the work of the Pediatric Initiative.** Funding is needed to ensure that every dying child and the families who love them have access to quality care and support.
- **Developing resources to support grieving children.** NHPCO will develop resources to equip school counselors, teachers, staff, children, and parents with the tools to identify and help grieving children.
- **Producing and disseminating materials to help people make**

informed choices about end-of-life decisions—and to have these conversations with family members and physicians.

- **Expanding the Workplace Initiative** to improve employer understanding of how to assist employees who are juggling work responsibilities with caregiving tasks.
- **Translating informational materials into multiple languages.**
- **Helping hospices reach out to and educate faith leaders** on the needs of their community members.



Hospice provides grief support to families in the wake of a death. Here, a little boy shares his feelings with his "big buddy" at a hospice-sponsored grief camp for children.

Caring Connections

Illness, death, and grief touch everyone. Yet, most people do not think about these issues until they are personally affected by them. The Caring Connections program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) works to bring information to people before a crisis.

Caring Connections helps individuals and families learn about, prepare for and find support during the last months of life.

The program offers information about:

- advance care planning
- caregiver support
- workplace and faith outreach programs.



Every year, NHPCO answers more than 5,500 HelpLine calls, many like this real-life example. "Joan" is the youngest daughter in a large family. She had just accompanied her father to the doctor. During the visit, the doctor mentioned hospice. This scared her. She felt "hospice" had a negative meaning. She called the HelpLine and spent 35 minutes discussing hospice. She learned what it offers, what values underlay the service, how it is paid for--and how it could help her dad and their whole family. At the end of the call, she was so relieved. She said, "Thank you so much; this has brought hospice into perspective for me."

The Value of Caring Connections Today

Research consistently shows that while the majority of people wish to die at home, most die in hospitals.

- The number of hospice programs has grown to more than 4,500, serving 1.4 million Americans each year.
- Despite the growth in hospice, lots of dying patients and their families still do not receive hospice care at all—or in time.
- For every person receiving hospice care, there is another person who needs it but is not getting it.
- People who talk with their family, physician, or others about their preferences for end-of-life care have less fear and anxiety, and feel more in control of their own medical care.
- Families whose loved one had completed an advance directive have markedly lower stress.



"Caring Connections doesn't just offer free materials—although that's an incredibly valuable service that people appreciate. We also actively seek opportunities to reach out to people where they live, work, pray, and play to ensure that everyone can find the support they need. Donors who invest in Caring Connections are making an important difference in the lives of tens of thousands of people."

– Kathy Brandt, Vice President, Innovation and Access

The National Hospice Foundation envisions a world where everyone facing serious illness, death, and grief will experience the best that humankind can offer.



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**1731 King Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314
877-470-6472 or 703-516-4928**

**info@nationalhospicefoundation.org
www.nationalhospicefoundation.org**