

December 22, 2010

Grieving children's stockings filled with special gift

Local children who are dealing with the loss of a loved one this holiday season will find a special gift under the tree from Family Hospice and Palliative Care. Every summer, Family Hospice holds Camp Healing Hearts, a free one-day bereavement camp for local kids coping with grief.

Now, Family Hospice is giving each of this year's camp attendees a Family Hospice Teddy Bear as a special holiday gift.

"It's our wish that the bears serve a dual purpose," said Allison Holst, a Family Hospice Bereavement Specialist who organizes Camp Healing Hearts. "Not only are they holiday presents, but a reminder that we are here to support these children during a difficult time of year. Family Hospice's commitment to their bereavement process does not end with Camp Healing Hearts."

The 10 local children who attended camp this past summer are from areas such as Brentwood, Delmont, Jefferson Hills, McKees Rocks, Meadow Lands and Tarentum.

The bears are being delivered to the children, who range in age from five to 13, by Family Hospice staffers, just in time for the holiday weekend.

Family Hospice provides ongoing individual and community bereavement counseling services for those who have experienced loss. 2011 will mark the eighth year for Camp Healing Hearts, which is held at The Center for Compassionate Care in Mt. Lebanon. More information on Family Hospice's bereavement services and Camp Healing Hearts may be found at www.familyhospice.com, click on "Patients and Caregivers," then "Bereavement and Support Groups."

Serving our area for more than 30 years, Family Hospice and Palliative Care is Western Pennsylvania's largest non-profit hospice provider.