

# **The Lands At Hillside Farms Farm-Based Green Care Services 2023 Children's Grief Camp**

July 31 - August 4, Ages 6 - 10

August 7 - August 11, Ages 11 - 14

August 14 - August 18, CASA Week\*

Hours: 9:00AM – 3:00PM (Before care and after care are available)

Since 2013, Hillside Farms has provided farm-based, animal assisted activities and therapies to our region's children. The five-day camp is open to children ages 6 through 14 who have experienced trauma. This includes the loss of an immediate family member through illness, accident, homicide or suicide. We also welcome children who are in foster care as well as those who are experiencing life-changing circumstances due to family addiction.

According to the National Alliance for Grieving Children, those children who suffer a significant loss are at a greater risk for depression, suicide, substance abuse, and poverty. The United States Department of Health & Human Services reports that childhood trauma is a risk factor for nearly all behavioral health and substance use disorders. Yet, children can and do recover from traumatic events.



Children will have the opportunity to interact with grief professionals, trauma counselors, occupational therapists, and registered dietitians as well as enjoy play time with other children who are grieving. Comfort can be found knowing there are peers having similar experiences and complicated feelings. Children learn healthy appropriate coping strategies and communication skills.

Each day includes grief education sessions as well as emotional support activities tailored to the children's individual needs. While group sessions and activities are encouraged, they are not required. Children have the acceptance and freedom to process and progress within their individual comfort zones.

What is especially exciting for the children is the chance to become engaged with the farm on a much deeper level.

Campers work alongside staff members, assisting with chores relevant to the operation of the farm. They learn where food comes from. They experience the importance of respecting the Earth, the environment, and animals. Activities include feeding and watering animals, brushing goats, donkeys, and calves, basic barn care, collecting eggs, and a camp favorite, reading to the animals. Other activities include hiking Hillside's vast pastures, exploring streams, creating nature-based crafts, and shopping at Hillside's free Farmer's Market. The week ends with a closing ceremony at the Children's Memory Garden, followed by a butterfly release.

Children's Grief Camp is made possible through the generosity of donors. Each camp is limited to 15 children. Children must be referred by a parent, guidance counselor, social worker, case worker, or therapist. The online referral form can be found at [hillsidefarms.org](https://hillsidefarms.org).

Priority is given to children who have not previously participated in grief camp. Parents/ Guardians/Foster Parent(s) are required to complete confidential pre- and post- surveys in order for child(ren) to participate.

\*\*CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocate for Children. To learn more please visit [luzerneCasa.org](https://luzerneCasa.org)

**Questions regarding Children's Grief Camp may be directed to:**

**[suzanne@hillsidefarms.org](mailto:suzanne@hillsidefarms.org)**

