



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Fernside Center for Grieving Children awarded \$1.3 million grant from bi3 to improve the health and well-being of children and families**

*Funding will expand services to Greater Cincinnati schools to support youth mental wellness*

(March 23, 2023)— bi3, a grants initiative to transform health and strategic partner of TriHealth, awarded \$1.3 million to the Fernside Center for Grieving Children to expand capacity and youth mental wellness services into area schools. Part of the [HOC Navigator network](#), the extended care network of Hospice of Cincinnati, Fernside was established in 1986 and is the nation's second-oldest provider of childhood bereavement services and is recognized as a national leader.

It's estimated more than 37,000 children in the Greater Cincinnati region will lose a close relative before graduating from high school. The three-year grant will fund additional staffing to expand bereavement services, such as support groups and crisis programs to more schools and families while seeding an endowment to support the organization long-term. Left untreated, grief can lead to adverse long-term effects on a child's mental well-being and contribute to future depression and self-destructive behaviors.

"Fernside has been providing critical grief support for children and families for over 35 years," said Victoria Ott, Executive Director of Fernside and the Goldstein Family Grief Center. "We exist to provide a safe place for youth to share their stories of loss while developing resilience and healthy coping skills. This amazing investment from bi3 will allow Fernside to continue to support the health and well-being of the community we serve, specifically allowing us to meet children and teens where they are through our growing School Program. We are inspired by bi3's support and faith in Fernside and are grateful for this gift."

"bi3 is committed to youth mental wellness and providing the resources to every family who needs it," Jill Miller, President & CEO of bi3, said. "We look forward to collaborating with Fernside to ensure all families and children in Greater Cincinnati have a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible."

Fernside provides grief support through a range of programs and serves over 1,200 individuals annually, covering a 23-county service area spanning Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. All services are offered free of charge. Fernside helped create the evidenced-based peer support model that is now commonly used by children's bereavement organizations nationwide. It is proven to help children and teens develop coping skills that help them manage their loss. In 2022, Fernside was designated as a Childhood Bereavement Changemaker by the National Alliance for Children's Grief.

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**About Fernside**

Fernside, established in 1986, as the nation's second oldest children's grief center, remains today a national leader in providing grief support services and outreach and education to the community and families. An affiliate of Hospice of Cincinnati, Fernside services compliment Hospice of Cincinnati's comprehensive bereavement program by addressing the unique needs of children.

**About HOC Navigators**

Our programs include Hospice of Cincinnati, PalliaCare Cincinnati, Hospital and Clinic-Based Palliative Medicine, Conversations of a Lifetime, Social Connections, The Goldstein Family Grief Center, and Fernside Center for Grieving Children. HOC Navigators creates the best possible and most meaningful advanced illness and end-of-life experience for all who need care and support in our community.

**About bi3**

bi3 is on a mission to transform health for all people in Greater Cincinnati by fueling innovation and health equity through grantmaking. bi3 leverages its strategic partnership with TriHealth to spark and scale new approaches to healthcare and partners with community-based organizations to fuel new solutions to deep-seated community health issues. bi3 envisions a day when every person has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible—a day when a person's health can no longer be predicted by race, ethnicity, ability or zip code. bi3 is a philanthropic initiative created by [Bethesda Inc.](#) to drive innovation in healthcare and accelerate health equity.