

## FOSTERING: LOVE AND LOSS GRIEVING WHEN A FOSTER CHILD LEAVES

**RPCI**

GREYSTONE

Bereavement Centre



### Description

In a recent study of almost 400 foster home families it was found that only 19% felt adequately prepared for the departure of their foster child. “Foster grief” is “real grief” and this workshop explores the impact of grief and loss on foster parents and their children when a foster child departs from their home. The workshop helps foster parents identify their grief, recognizing that it is a normal part of loving and caring for a child and that the love, caring, and nurturing they provided to the child will always be a part of the child.

### Learning Outcomes

On completion of the workshop participants will be able to:

- Understand the effects of grief and loss on themselves and their children.
- Identify different types of grief and loss including anticipatory grief, disenfranchised grief and ambiguous loss [separation loss].
- Identify their grief and recognize that “foster grief” is “real grief”.
- Begin to accept that they are not in control of the departure of the child, but they are in control of how they deal with the effects of the loss on themselves and their children.
- Begin to accept the departure of the child and understand the love, caring, and nurturing they provided to the child will stay with the child throughout the child’s life.
- Prepare themselves and their children early in the process for the departure of the child through open and honest conversation, trying to be as involved as possible in the departure of the child and creating things like scrapbooks or albums of the child.
- Use self-care methods, rituals, and discussion after the child’s departure to help themselves on their grief journey.

### Designed For

Foster parents who have fostered several children and have experienced the loss of having the child moved, new foster parents, child and family services professionals who work with foster families, and counsellors who work with foster families experiencing the loss of a foster child being moved from their home.