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Camp Firefly for Grieving Children Returns in 2020 as “Camp-in-a-Box”

(June 16, 2020, Moorestown NJ) Continuing to meet the challenges of the pandemic and all of the issues generated by COVID-19, Moorestown Visiting Nurses & Hospice has announced changes to their Camp Firefly grief support program for children in 2020. In past years available as an overnight grief support weekend, in 2020 Camp Firefly will be presented as “Camp-in-a-Box,” a comprehensive program utilizing age-appropriate online resources, telehealth conferences and physical materials to help the children process their grief and develop positive coping skills for the future. The Camp Firefly program is available in 2020 to bereaved children ages 7-14 from Burlington, Camden or Gloucester counties.

The organization has closely monitored the situation with COVID-19 as it relates to Camp Firefly and is following the recommendations of the CDC and the State of New Jersey for best practices related to camp activities and social distancing this summer. As of this time, overnight camps will not be permitted in New Jersey through the summer. Camp Firefly will continue in 2020, but will not be presented in its traditional form this year.

The Camp Firefly grief support program for children was built on the agency’s caring mission to provide community health care services that promote health, independence, and dignity, and to teach people to care for themselves and each other. As such, their highest priority is to maintain and protect the health and safety of the children, families, volunteers and staff who come together at Camp Firefly each year.

Recognizing the importance of grief counseling for children who have experienced a loss, Moorestown Visiting Nurses & Hospice will meet their needs by continuing supportive services this summer in the form of their Digital Camp Firefly “Camp-in-a-Box” program with a goal to

provide a meaningful and constructive experience for all who take part. According to Moorestown VNA President/CEO Chickie Holcombe “We’re rising to the challenge of continuing to support grieving children and their families during this pandemic. More than ever we need to work together for the health and safety of our children and all of our community. Re-inventing Camp Firefly so we can still deliver our promise of grief support is just one of the ways we’ve adapted.”

In keeping with the annual time frame of Camp Firefly, at the end of August each registered child will receive an age-appropriate “Camp-in-a- Box” filled with activities and information centered on understanding their grief, preserving their cherished memories, and building positive coping skills for the future. Some examples of the activities included are a memorial lantern that the children will design and light with a safe (battery operated) candle, an inside/out box that will allow them to express their innermost feelings, and workbook activities that will help them open up to their counselor through the grieving process. The box will also contain some fun summer activities and surprises to be enjoyed and shared with family and friends. All will be contained in a keepsake knapsack printed with an acknowledgement of key Camp Firefly sponsors and donors. Children and their guardians will be able to access counselors online who will guide them through the grief activities and provide support during their sessions. Moorestown Visiting Nurses & Hospice will also build a monitored, safe, online “Camp Firefly” community where children can share projects, thoughts and ideas with their peers who have experienced similar loss.

The program remains free to all registered children.

Applications are currently being taken, and space is limited. If you know of a child who is grieving, or are interested in learning more about the Camp Firefly 2020 “Camp-in-a-Box” program contact Moorestown Visiting Nurses & Hospice at (856) 552-1300 or services@moorestownvna.org.

Founded in 1904, Moorestown Visiting Nurse Association is a non-profit organization that provides home care, private duty, hospice, counseling and community wellness services to individuals and families in Burlington, Camden and Gloucester counties. To find out more about the agency, contact (856) 552-1300, e-mail services@moorestownvna.org, or visit online at www.moorestownvna.org and facebook/moorestownvna.