

# *Rainbows For All God's Children*

Dear Parent,

08-16-17

When something significant happens in a family, the entire family is affected. Even though death or divorce appears to be only a grown-up problem, it does have a profound effect on the children that it touches. If a parent dies or a divorce occurs, not only do the parents grieve, the children do also. Because of their age and short life experience, children find it extremely difficult to verbalize those feelings.

We have some very beautiful, sensitive, caring, trained adults who have said "yes" to helping these children put their feelings into words, work through their grief, build a stronger sense of self-esteem, and begin to accept what has taken place in the family. Last year we had 80 children and 16 trained facilitators working together to support one another.

I am proud to announce that the Rainbow program will once again be incorporated into our St. Francis curriculum.

**RAINBOWS FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN** is a peer-support program designed to help students from Kindergarten through eighth grade, who live in one-parent or reconstituted families, to deal with initial grieving and on-going coping in their particular situations.

**HOW DOES IT WORK?** Students meet with 3-5 other children their own age, together with a trained adult, in an atmosphere of confidentiality. As they share experiences and feelings, group members discover that they are not alone in their situation, nor are they responsible for it. As they support and help one another, each one grows in self-esteem and self-confidence.

**WHEN ARE THE MEETINGS?** Twelve forty minute meetings are held **during the school day beginning in October running through April**. In addition, one school day is devoted, at the end of the program, to re-emphasizing the values of self-worth, family, and trust in God, values which are basic to **Rainbows For All God's Children**.

**CAN A CHILD JOIN MORE THAN ONE YEAR?** Students who have already been in "Rainbows" are welcomed to repeat the program at different stages of development, or as changing family circumstances warrant.

**IS THERE A COST?** St. Francis School asks that each family involved in Rainbows contributes a \$10.00 donation for workbooks and other supplies.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This is NOT a counseling or therapy program. Be assured, also, that **CONFIDENTIALITY** in this context is explained to the children as "privacy". They are free to tell about what they said or did, but not about what another group member said or did. Confidentiality applies also to the trained adult facilitators.

If your child is part of a single-parent family, a step-family, has experienced the death of a loved family member, friend or sibling, or struggling through a painful experience, this will be an opportunity for him/her to share on the outside what is happening on the inside.

Please **SIGN AND RETURN IN THIS ENVELOPE** the following permission form, if you would like your son or daughter to be included in the Rainbow program. For added privacy feel free to send the signed permission form in a sealed envelope through the white envelope system. Or have your child give it to his/her teacher.

If I can be of further assistance to you or your child, please feel free to call me at 334-7707 Ext.234.

Sincerely yours,

Jacqueline Gelardi, MA, LMHC, NCC  
Saint Francis School Counselor  
Rainbow Registered Director

**RAINBOW FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN**