

AT FAMILY DAY CAMP, CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES DISCOVER HOPE



LEVY COUNTY—Hospice of the Nature Coast held Family Day Camp on Saturday, May 17 from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm at the Sheriff’s Youth Ranch Caruth Camp, located 7 miles north of Inglis on US Highway 19.

Hospice of the Nature Coast a program of Hospice of Citrus County, licensed in 1985, serves residents in an 11-county area of North Central Florida.

Grief is part of the experience of being human and we often long for a way in which our sorrow can be heard and our joy uplifted. Family Day Camp served as a daylong family bereavement camp which provided age-appropriate grief counseling and education. The camp encouraged children, teens and adults to share their thoughts and feelings with others their own age in an atmosphere of fun and friendship administered by trained bereavement counselors and volunteers.

A mixture of fun activities, including games, discussions, and focused arts and crafts, allowed participants to express feelings and concerns, identify supportive people, and find appropriate ways to use memories for healing and growth.

Family Day Camp provided families the opportunities for sharing and commemorating the lives of loved ones who have died—all within the supportive environment of the camp experience.

Hospice of the Nature Coast Grief Services Manager Jonathan Beard stated, “Family Day Camp provided an excellent outlet for families to express their feelings. Sometimes families need help communicating their pain and confusion after a loss. Camp uses the beautiful outdoor environment to enhance participants’ ability to begin healing from grief. It’s our goal to help bring comfort and hope to families during the natural season of grieving over their loved ones.”

Family Day Camp consisted of four components: **Herry's Kids** is a preschool program for toddlers and youngsters which keeps them safe and close-by their family members during camp. **Camp Good Hope** brings together elementary school aged children who have endured similar losses at a time when they need guidance and understanding. The children are encouraged to deal with their feelings.

Teenagers often are seen as hard to reach because they are no longer children, but not yet adults either. **Teen Encounter** provides grieving teens in middle and high school an opportunity to talk through concerns and fears with other teens. "Adolescents have unique grief reactions and coping skills," said Social Worker Sarah Morley. "Therefore, teens need services that are directed toward them." **Good Grief** assists adults with how to cope with the array of emotions they commonly experience during grief.

There was no cost for Family Day Camp and lunch was provided courtesy of Gobblers Eatery located in Inglis. The Nature Coast Sportsmans Club and Bubba Fishing Club also made donations to Family Day Camp. Family Day Camp is supported solely through community donations, corporate sponsorships and grants.

Hospice of the Nature Coast, a program of Hospice of Citrus County, Licensed in 1985, is preserving the integrity of the hospice philosophy in the finest traditions of serving you. For additional information on services, call 866.463.1385, or visit us on the web at www.hospiceofthenaturecoast.org.