



Media Kit

 **experience
camps**
Childhood carries on.™





Who We Are

Mission

We give grieving children experiences that change their lives forever.

Vision

Every grieving child deserves to live a life rich with possibility.

Experience Camps is an award-winning non-profit that transforms the lives of grieving children through summer camp programs and innovative, year-round initiatives.

Through compassion, connection, and play, we allow grieving children to embody a life full of hope and possibility. By amplifying their voices, we are creating a more grief-sensitive culture.



Background

Experience Camps began in 2009, as one camp serving 27 boys in Maine. Over the last 17 years, we have grown to serve nearly 1800 kids and teens at 16 camps in 8 locations around the country.

Camp provides an opportunity for children to be surrounded by peers who “get it” and allows them to focus on the joys of childhood instead of the grief that can wear them down. At camp, grief activities are supervised by grief specialists who facilitate peer-support opportunities and coping techniques for the campers.

With all our gained knowledge from camp, we then applied our hundreds of thousands of hours with grieving kids to create other year-round programs and expert-driven digital content that supports millions of grieving children while building a grief-sensitive culture.

This includes our community-based Meetups program, our content on GRIEF SUCKS for teens, and our presence on TikTok and other platforms.

Why Our Work Matters

Approximately 6.6 million children in the U.S. will experience the death of a parent, sibling, or primary caregiver by the time they turn 18. Grieving young people are more likely to endure mental- health challenges, poor academic performance, and negative long-term physical and financial outcomes than non-grieving peers. Left unaddressed, childhood grief can undermine a child's future. But with the proper interventions and an ecosystem of support around them, it can lead to remarkable resilience.

Rates of childhood grief

6.6 MILLION

U.S. children will have experienced the death of a parent or sibling by age 18.

The racial grief gap

By age 10,

Black and Brown children are 2X more likely to have dealt with the death of their father and 3X more likely to have dealt with the death of their mother.

Black children

make up 14% of U.S. children, and compose 20% of those experiencing the death of a parent to COVID.

65% of all children

experiencing COVID-associated orphanhood or the death of their primary caregiver are of a racial or ethnic minority.

Potential impacts of childhood bereavement

- Childhood grief is associated with developmental disruptions, including relationship, academic, and career functioning; substance abuse; mental-health challenges, including depression and suicide; and poverty.
- Deaths of relatives who represent key sources of social support can fundamentally alter youths' economic security and, in turn, the success and timing of their transition to adulthood.
- Children who experience a parent's death are 50% more likely to die by early adulthood.
- Death has an intergenerational impact. Among adults who lost a parent when they were growing up, 79% said that when they became a parent, they missed the guidance of the parent who died; 80% said the experience was the hardest thing they ever had to face.

The need for grief support

89% of Americans

think that everyone should learn to talk about grief, but 70% don't know what to say or do when someone is grieving.

86% of Americans

say that grief should be addressed as an important mental health issue.

63% of children

participating in Experience Camps reported using their “grief skills” to help others cope with the pandemic.



Facts and Figures - Camp

MISSION	FOUNDED	LOCATIONS	AGES SERVED
<p>We give grieving children experiences that will change their lives forever.</p>	<p>2009</p>	<p>We offer 16 week-long, overnight summer camp programs in California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maine, Michigan, Maryland, Texas, and Pennsylvania, serving grieving children.</p>	<p>Ages 8 - 18 directly served Educational and awareness campaigns reach people of all ages</p>

Facts and Figures - Camp

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Children who have experienced the death of a parent, sibling, or primary caregiver.
- 53% of participating children had a gross family income of less than \$75,000
- 39% of participating children are BIPOC

COST

No cost for children and families

CAMP RETURN

86% of our campers return year after year, for an average of five years

GROWTH RATE

Applications more than doubled from 1,011 in 2020 to 2,196 in 2025, representing a 117% increase over five years. During that same period, our waitlist has continued to grow, reflecting the increasing need for our programs and support services.

Facts and Figures - Camp

CAMPERS	VOLUNTEERS	IMPACT
<p>1,082 enrolled in 2023 1,244 enrolled in 2024 1,424 enrolled in 2025</p>	<p>804 volunteers in 2023 975 volunteers in 2024 1,146 volunteers in 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of campers left feeling an increased sense of belonging • 84% of campers were more hopeful that they could have a better life • 91% of campers would recommend Experience Camps to a grieving friend

Facts and Figures - GRIEF SUCKS

Launch	Unique users, year 1	WHAT IT IS
<p>GRIEF SUCKS was launched in Jan 2024</p>	<p>14,200 in 2024 15,000 in 2025</p>	<p>Griefsucks.com is a digital platform that provides a space for grieving teens to connect, share their feelings, and support each other. This platform has won several national awards including “Content Marketing Program of the Year” from the Women in Content Marketing Awards, a SXSW Innovation Award Finalist, and a Telly Award (Silver) for “Health and Wellness.”</p>

Facts and Figures - Meetups

<p>Launch</p>	<p>Participants in 2025</p>	<p>WHAT IT IS</p>
<p>Meetups was launched in 2024 with 73 individuals</p>	<p>771 individuals</p>	<p>Meetups are in-person community events where grief is named out loud for grieving youth (ages 8–18) and their caregivers. Designed in partnership with trusted local organizations, Meetups look different in every place but are always based around three themes - Play, Create & Experience.</p>

Facts and Figures - Social Media

<p>@experiencecamps on IG</p>	<p>@experiencecamps on TT</p>	<p>GRIEF SUCKS Social Media</p>
<p>100,114 followers</p>	<p>186,987 90M+ views</p>	<p>IG: 4,585 followers TT: 2,910 followers</p>

Awards:

2025 FINALIST FOR SXSW INNOVATION AWARD FOR GRIEF SUCKS

2024 TELLY AWARD, SILVER

Experience Camps won the Silver Telly Winner in “Social Video – Health and Wellness” in the 45th Annual Telly Awards for our “Real Talk” series on the digital platform GRIEF SUCKS (www.griefsucks.com). The Telly Awards honors excellence in video and television across all screens and is judged by leaders from video platforms, television, streaming networks, production companies.

2024 “CONTENT MARKETING PROGRAM OF THE YEAR”

GRIEF SUCKS, created by Experience Camps, won the 2024 “Content Marketing Program of the Year” by Women in Content Marketing Awards (WICMAs), which “recognizes the outstanding work of inspiring and accomplished innovators, spotlighting specific achievements made by women and showcasing how they have positively impacted others—colleagues, clients, and the industry as a whole—through their leadership.”



Awards:

2023 ANTHEM AWARD, GOLD

Experience Camps won the 2023 prestigious Gold Anthem Award, launched by the Webby Awards “in response to the prevalence social good has taken within the national conversation and cultural zeitgeist in recent years.” We were the top prize winner in the category of “Human & Civil Rights: Community Engagement.”

2023 TELLY AWARD, GOLD; "MOST IMPACTFUL FILM," Social Impact Film Festival

The documentary "Inside a Grief Camp,"--which takes viewers inside one of our camp programs--won the prestigious Telly Award in 2023, and "Most Impactful Film" award at the Social Impact Film Festival.

2023 FINALIST FOR FAST COMPANY INNOVATION BY DESIGN AWARD (FOR EXPERIENCECRAFT)

2022 CAUSEARTIST PICK

Our CEO Sara Deren was named by Causeartist "one of 32 nonprofit leaders who will impact the world."



Spokespersons for Experience Camps



The following Experience Camps staff members are available for interviews:



Sara Deren

Founder Chief Executive Officer

Under Sara’s leadership, Experience Camps has conducted original research on the state of grief and launched 13 camp programs nationally as well as virtual spaces and community programs for kids and teens. She received her MBA from Columbia and blends her background in business & technology with her passion for the mission. In 2020, she received an award for Best Entrepreneurial, Scaling, from Connecticut Entrepreneur Awards and was named a Patriots Difference Maker by The Kraft Family and Patriots Foundation. Sara was named by Causeartist one of 32 non-profit leaders who will impact the world in 2022, and was a mentor at SWSW in 2023.

Topics can speak to:

- How and why she founded Experience Camps
- How the model for this grief camp was built on joy
- How her business and finance background helped her scale our non-profit
- What we’ve learned from thousands of grieving children



Jesse Moss

Director of Innovation

Jesse Moss is the director of innovation and former director of marketing at Experience Camps, an award-winning nonprofit that transforms the lives of grieving children through innovative, year-round programs. Motivated by her own experiences with loss, Jesse has created platforms and programs that have reached over 80 million people, building a grief-sensitive culture online. She launched the first TikTok account for grieving kids, which now has over 185,000 followers, and developed the interactive site griefsucks.com, building a community for connection, belonging, and healing. Jesse aspires to lead a movement that reaches more than 6 million grieving children in the U.S. by creating connected communities to break cycles of trauma and build a generation of engaged citizens

Topics can speak to:

- Creating culturally-informed innovative programs for grieving kids
- How she healed by working with grieving kids at Experience Camps
- Sibling grief and parental grief in her twenties and thirties
- GenZ and the ways they approach death, dying, and grief



Kiri Meyer

Senior National Clinical Manager

Kiri Meyer is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in Wisconsin, a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC), and has her academic Child Life Certificate. Kiri has been licensed for over a decade helping to support individuals and families of all ages through individual and family therapy, as well as other non-profit programs. Kiri has also spent almost two decades volunteering or working for camp-based programs throughout the U.S., as well as Ireland. Kiri's specialties center around the fields of trauma and grief. She has worked to help organizations by providing trainings, consultations, and leadership for clinical teams at camp.

Topics can speak to:

- How grief impacts the body, brain, and heart—and the long-term effects of unsupported childhood grief.
- The intersection of grief and trauma for individuals, communities, and society.
- Creative, inclusive approaches to grief support, coping skills, and grief education for schools, organizations, businesses, and healthcare systems.
- Specialized grief topics, including grief theory and practice, neurodiversity and grief, somatic approaches, and supporting grievors across the lifespan.



Sample Press
We've Been
Featured In:

THE CHRONICLE
OF PHILANTHROPY



Forbes



EducationWeek®

Mashable

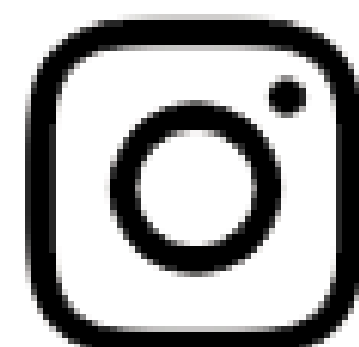
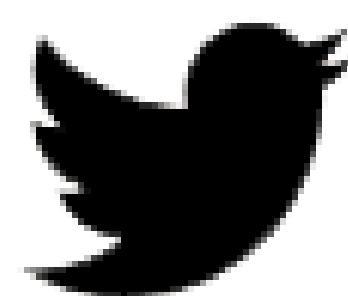
VOGUE



The New York Times



Check Out Our Social Media



[@experiencecamps](#)
[@griefsucksdotcom](#)



experience camps



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