# How much does it cost?

* It is free to participate in these groups.

# Why do I need to attend the information session before joining a group?

* Attending the information session will introduce you to the topics and content that will be covered in the program.
* We will also be able to answer any questions you might have about the program and help you decide if joining the group is a good fit for you.
* Give you an idea of the experience of group interaction.

# What if the group isn’t a good fit for my needs right now?

* We’ll help you explore other options and services that might work for you.
* After an information session, you might decide it’s not the right time for you to participate in a group and that’s okay. You can join a group at any time. If it’s been more than a year since you attended an information session, we will ask you to attend another one to reintroduce you to what the group is like and what content we will be covering.

# Do I need to pre-register for the information session?

* Yes. We need you to pre-register at least a day in advance so that we can send you the meeting link before the session.
* You will need to fill out three forms: youth assent, teletherapy assent and parental consent forms
  + **The youth assent form** is an agreement between the participating youth and CMHA facilitators on how information shared in group will be used. It outlines protocols such as when CMHA facilitators might need to ask for extra help outside of the group in cases of emergency or urgent situations. Examples include if the youth needs help in staying safe or if the youth shares information about a person younger that 18 years old who is at risk.
  + **The teletherapy assent** is a form that the participating youth will sign to show that they have agreed to attend the sessions virtually.
  + **The parental consent form** is to be completed by a parent/guardian/caregiver for the participating youth under 18 years of age. It indicates that the parent/caregiver is aware that the youth is receiving grief support virtually. **Information that is shared in the group will not be shared with the parents/caregivers/guardians.** Parents/caregivers/guardians will only be informed if the youth is at a risk of being harmed or of harming themselves, or if the youth is aware of someone under the age of 18 who is at a risk of being harmed or of harming themselves. All other information is kept within the group.

**How do I register for a group?**

* Contact Peris by email at pwasonga@cmha-edmonton.ab.ca or call 780-732-6654. We’ll help you with everything you need to register for any of the intake dates posted.

**How soon after attending the information session can I join a group?**

* You may join a group one week after the information session when the first module of a group session takes place.
* You also have the option to join a group later, whenever the first module starts. They start roughly every 5 weeks.
* If you don’t join a group right away, you can at any point in the next 12 months without participating in another information session. After 12 months, we will ask you to participate again to reintroduce you to the group setting and content we will cover.

**Who can attend the group?**

* Anyone between the ages of 12 - 25 who has lost someone they know to suicide.

**Do I need parental consent to join the group?**

* We need parent or guardian consent for anyone under the age of 18 who wants to join the group.
* Parents or Guardians must complete the ‘parental consent form’ provided during the pre-registration process before you can attend an information session.

**Where else can I get help?**

* There are other agencies in Edmonton who have psychologists, counsellors, knowledge keepers and other supports to help young people and their families through the grieving process. This includes…[Grief Programs - Pilgrims Hospice](https://pilgrimshospice.com/grief-programs/) , [Edmonton Grief Counselling | The Grief & Trauma Healing Centre (healmyheart.ca)](https://www.healmyheart.ca/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI5bvP5oj9_wIVgDStBh32Twm0EAAYASAAEgIwNvD_BwE) [Staff – Jewish Family Services (jfse.org)](https://www.jfse.org/staff/)[Edmonton Native Healing Centre (e-nhc.org)](https://e-nhc.org/)
* 211 can also help you find the right support.
* Kickstand Connect has a team of Registered Psychologists, Counsellors and Social Workers who can help. More information can be found at [Kickstand Connect | kickstand (mykickstand.ca)](https://mykickstand.ca/connect#Services)

**How do I know if I am ready to join a group?**

* Grieving is a unique experience; you will grieve differently than others.
* Since we believe that you know yourself best, we let you decide when you feel ready.
* The information session might help you decide if you are ready to join a group.

**How long is the program?**

* There are 3 modules, each taking 4 weeks, which makes a total of 12 sessions.
* We encourage you to attend the full 12 weeks to get the whole experience of exploring your grieving process with the support of others.

**What content do the modules cover?**

* **Understanding and coping with your emotions**

In this module, you will learn about emotional regulation, and how to feel new emotions in a healthy way. The emotions you experience are natural, and no emotion is good or bad. We will explore how being aware of what you are feeling can help, and why the nervous system responds like this to the experience of loss. We will also cover how reminders of your loss affect you, learn strategies to cope, and talk as a group about our experiences and strategies moving forward.

* **The role of self-compassion**

In this module, you will explore how important self-compassion is in the grieving process. We will talk about the difficult feelings that loss may bring. You may be feeling shame, guilt, anger, relief, anxiety, responsibility, or others. The group will share and try to resolve any unfinished parts of their stories because of their loss. You will learn about the importance of being kind to yourself during your recovery and how you are deserving of healing. We will provide a safe space for you to express yourself and to try looking at things from another perspective.

* **How has loss affected my perspective?**

In this module, you will explore how your experience has changed your view of yourself, others, and the world around you. A major loss can also impact our beliefs and values, which are key parts of who we are. We will help you to look at your identity now and figure out who you are, who you want to be, and how we can help you get there. As a part of this, we will talk about changes to your day-to-day life, what your worries are, and what you want from life now.

**What if I can’t attend all 4 sessions in the module?**

* Please let the facilitator know if you are unable to attend.
* You can also ask for a summary of what was covered in that day’s session.

**Who leads the group sessions?**

* Group sessions are co-run by a Counsellor, a Support Worker, and a youth between the ages of 18-25 who has experienced a loss to suicide.

**What can I expect in the group sessions?**

* Each group session offers a safe place for you to share your experience and listen to how others have experienced a loss to suicide.
* This is a place to learn about the grieving process and to process your grief with the support of others who understand.

**How long are the sessions?**

* Sessions for 12 - 14 year old groups are 60 minutes long.
* Sessions for 15 - 17 and 18 - 25 year old groups are 90 minutes long.