

MAKING LOSS EASIER FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

Loss is difficult for adults. Imagine what it must feel like to a small child who is just learning to navigate the world. The caring team at Friends Center for Children strives to make challenges like loss, trauma, and the stresses of living in poverty easier for the infants, toddlers, and preschoolers they serve.

Center Director, Allyx Schiavone explains, “We have multiple children navigating different forms of loss. We see this every day. We see this through relationship changes such as divorce or separation; we see it through the death of loved ones. We also see it when families or teachers leave.”

With partial funding from a \$15,000 [unrestricted](#) grant from The Community Foundation, the Friends Center for Children initiated the Adverse Childhood Experiences Pilot Program. That comprehensive plan identified children who endured adverse experiences, educated staff and parents on how to support those children, and ultimately reshaped the Center’s early childhood education model to include ongoing social, emotional, and mental health components.



Friends Center for Children supports children who endure adverse experiences.

Early on in the program’s evolution, it became clear there were few tools appropriate for the young children, ages 3 months to 5 years of age, Friends Center supports through its year-round early childhood education services. Social Work Consultant, Bonnie Muller was inspired by a creative solution; a heart-warming song, which was developed into the following video:



Through the use of the “Presence now. . .and then” song and video, along with a variety of other research-based tools, Friends Center educators were able to comfort children, while also guiding parents to recognize and address emotional issues. Studies have indicated that addressing adverse childhood experiences through such supportive measures may promote fewer at-risk behaviors and a greater sense of well-being throughout a child’s life.

To learn more about Friends Center for Children, and to support their innovative early childhood education programs, please visit giveGreater.org®.

Did You Know?

After screening 17,000 adults, the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study concluded negative childhood experiences are strongly associated with the leading causes of illness and death, along with poor quality of life.

Source: Injury Prevention & Control: [Division of Violence Prevention: ACE Study](#)