

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Camp Nabi and Phoenix Rising grief camp volunteers by the numbers**

(Pasadena, MD, August 30, 2017) — The answer is 72. The question is, how many volunteers, including staff members, does it take to make camp happen for 51 grieving children?

Six dozen people with a passion for helping kids gathered at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center in Millersville for the 26<sup>th</sup> Chesapeake Life Center bereavements camps. The volunteers worked from Aug. 11 to 13 and included:

- 51 Big Buddies, adult volunteers trained to stay with one child for the duration of the camp to guide them through the emotional weekend.
- 10 Teen Corps volunteers.
- 3 volunteers who had attended the camp when they were children.
- 24 volunteers who were helping at the camp for the first time.
- 3 volunteers who have been volunteering at the camp for more than 20 years. They include 22-year veterans Carol Fritz and John Petrosillo, and Beth Edelstein, who has been volunteering at the camp for 25 years.

Another number that helped make the camp happen: 16. That is the number of individuals, businesses and organizations who sponsored this year's camp.

The late Betty Asplund, the founding director of what would become the Chesapeake Life Center, started Camp Nabi in 1982 so that grieving kids can learn they are not alone. With the help of this cadre of volunteers, they share their stories in a safe environment while enjoying fun camp activities. Phoenix Rising was added 10 years later so that teens can experience the same healing, but on a level they can appreciate.

Chesapeake Life Center Director Susan Coale said she is amazed every year by the volunteers who help make the weekend a turning point for many children. "The people who volunteer at our bereavement camps not only put in long hours at the camp, but also must go through intensive training to give them the tools required to help and protect these fragile children," she said. "I imagine for many of them, it is the smiles they see on Sunday afternoon that keeps them coming back to help each year."

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(Aug. 12, 2017) Jaiden Elseth works on decorating a pillowcase he will use while participating in Camp Nabi at Arlington Echo. Photo by Elyzabeth Marcussen, Hospice of the Chesapeake



(Aug. 12, 2017) Leniyah Moore keeps her distance from a crab before it gets tossed back into the waters on the shore of Arlington Echo. Photo by Elyzabeth Marcussen, Hospice of the Chesapeake



(Aug. 12, 2017) Phoenix Rising camper Taylor Bosley, hams it up to the camera while fellow camper, Chrissy Lightfoot-Taylor, reads aloud a camp group project at Arlington Echo in Millersville. Photo by Elyzabeth Marcussen, Hospice of the Chesapeake



(Aug. 12, 2017) Middle school camper Tristian Colley talks with his Camp Nabi Big Buddy, Lucas Bilek, as he works on creating a memory flag to honor the loved one he lost. Photo by Elyzabeth Marcussen, Hospice of the Chesapeake.

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Chesapeake Life Center, a program service of Hospice of the Chesapeake, serves hospice family members and the community with bereavement services and activities aimed at enhancing the quality of life for those grieving the loss of a loved one. For more information on Chesapeake Life Center programs, call 410-987-2129 or visit [www.chesapeakelifecenter.org](http://www.chesapeakelifecenter.org).