

CAMP LIFETIMES

"Rays of Hope"

The Lory's Place 3rd Annual Bereavement Day Camp was held this summer on June 18th in Watervliet, Michigan at the Ronora Lodge and Retreat Center. The theme for this year's camp was "Rays of Hope." Ray is a name that signifies "guidance" and hope is to "be optimistic." Throughout the day, children and teens ages 5-15 years, were encouraged to think about and identify the "Rays of Hope" that are present in their lives. Camp activities were centered around the idea that when a special person in your life dies, there are other people, places, and things available to provide you with support and guidance to help brighten your life with hope as you travel on your grief journey. One of the activities was to make a lighthouse out of a bottle to illustrate that there are people in your life that can guide you safely through your journey in times of trouble or distress. Another was to make a luminary that would provide light to your path even through the darkest of times. One more was to engage in a tree planting to learn how the roots of the tree represent a support system that helps share the load and provides nourishment to help keep us healthy. In addition to all of the activities, there was plenty of time to eat great food, relax and enjoy being together, and play outside in the beautiful landscape of the camp grounds. At the end of the day, participants gained a better understanding that loving and caring people are available to walk beside them as they continue on their journey.

Camp Lifetimes is open to all Lory's Place participants, as well as, all children in the community who have been impacted by a death. Camp is free of charge and our goal is to allow kids to have fun and also normalize their grief by providing them an opportunity to be with others their own age who have also experienced a loss by death. Our goal does not change from year to year; however, the theme and activities do change each year. Camp Lifetimes is an integral component of the programming services of Lory's Place and we look forward to another great camp experience next year.