

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Loved Ones Honored at 2nd Annual *Gathering in Remembrance* Event

Manchester, NH – Friends of Aine, a nonprofit organization providing bereavement support services to grieving children, teens, and families, held its second annual *Gathering in Remembrance* on Sunday at Northeast Delta Dental Stadium.

The event, presented by the Nicholas Family, brought hundreds of children and adults experiencing grief together to remember lost loved ones while learning strategies to work toward healing. Governor Christopher T. Sununu issued a proclamation naming June 12, 2022 Friends of Aine Gathering in Remembrance Day, which was read at the beginning of the program. The keynote address was delivered by Paul Thayer, MA, MDiv, DM, Clinical Associate Professor and Program Co-Director for Child Life & Family-Centered Care at Boston University's Wheelock College of Education and Human Development. He stressed the importance of creating a safe place for grieving children to make connections with others facing similar challenges.

Photos of loved ones were shared in a tribute video on the stadium's Jumbotron and a butterfly release helped participants honor and remember them. A "Grieving Kids' Bill of Rights" was also presented at the podium by two grief program participants to remind attendees about their freedom to have space and time to grieve.



*Volunteer Kat Zimmerman participating in butterfly release.
Photo credit: Headshots Photography.*



*Children's Artwork Exhibit.
Photo credit: Headshots Photography.*

The event also featured an artwork exhibit by children in attendance and activities on the stadium's concourse. Nonprofit community resources, including Adverse Childhood Experiences Response Team (ACERT) Manchester, Makin' It Happen, Manchester Police Athletic League (MPAL), Manchester Proud, SEE Science Center, Waypoint, and YWCA shared information about their services. Additional resources were provided by the Boys & Girls Club of Manchester, Maple Dragonfly Co., and UpReach Therapeutic Equestrian Center.



“We are grateful to our sponsors and supporters who made this special day possible,” said Christine Phillips, Co-Founder, Friends of Aine. “The *Gathering in Remembrance* is a unique opportunity for the community to come together so all individuals – and children in particular – don’t feel isolated in their grief.”

Governor Christopher Sununu's Proclamation for Friends of Aine Gathering in Remembrance Day.
From L to R: Joe Murray, Friends of Aine Board Chair and Vice President of Government Relations and Public Affairs, Fidelity Investments; David and Christine Phillips, Friends of Aine Co-Founders; Presenting Sponsor, the Nicholas Family.

Sponsors of the Gathering in Remembrance included Jeanine & Company, Rothwangl Dental Care, Elliot Health System, Rochette Funeral Home, Novocure, Home Health & Hospice Care, and Dartmouth Health.

For more information about Friends of Aine and its grief support services, visit friendsofaine.com.

ABOUT FRIENDS OF AINE

Friends of Aine is the only nonprofit organization in New Hampshire whose sole mission is to support grieving children, teens, and families. Through a network of trained volunteer facilitators, its peer-to-peer support programs assist children and teens with sharing their experiences, exploring topics related to grief, learning coping strategies, and not feeling alone in their grief. Thanks to the generosity of donors, there is no cost to families. Friends of Aine also provides training, education, and research to families and professionals. The organization is inspired by Aine Phillips, who died suddenly at the age of eight, and the lack of existing grief support at the time for her surviving sister, Bella. For more information about Friends of Aine, visit friendsofaine.com.

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