

2025 Impact Report



Grief changes lives, and so does compassion. In 2025, Companions on a Journey continued to be unwavering in our commitment to walk alongside those who grieve, providing hope, strength, and healing when it is needed most. By providing support, education, and a caring community, we empowered children, teens, adults, and families to navigate loss with courage and connection. Moving forward, we want to do even more.

To that end, this year our staff and board members focused on strategic planning for COJ's future. We assessed where the organization is today, envisioned where we want it to be in the future, and identified the goals, strategies, and resources needed to get there. I'm thrilled that by the end of 2025, we made strides in several of the strategic plan's goals—our endowment with the Northern Cincinnati Foundation has been seeded with \$50,000; we planned and added three new grief support offerings; we educated and trained 10 new facilitators; and we recruited and secured four new board members. This is just a start toward the growth and greater support we pray COJ will be able to provide in the years ahead.

None of this is possible without a community of individuals and corporate partners who are committed to supporting COJ's mission financially and in many other ways. This is what ensures that no one grieves alone, allowing us to expand our footprint and services. In 2025, we were blessed by individual giving that was up significantly over the prior year. In addition, our Morning of Hope Breakfast fundraiser was wonderfully bolstered by both individual and corporate gifts that helped us exceed our financial goals.

I remain in awe at how God's hand is at work in guiding the services we are able to provide to the bereaved in our community. As we continue to work toward the goals of our strategic plan, we pray it translates into countless lives touched at their darkest moments with the lights of hope, strength, and healing.

With gratitude and faith,

Sheila Murajo-Kanya

Executive Director



88 Volunteers = 3,354 Hours

In 2025, our volunteers saved us **\$108,736.68** (\$32.42/hour x 3,354 hours)

\$16,128 Savings from in-kind donations & meeting space

1,595 Bereaved Individuals Served in Group Programs & Healing Events



School-Based Support

89 Monthly School Groups

64 Partner Schools

1,066 Individual Students Served



Adult & Family Support

10 Monthly Adult & Family Support Groups

368 Individuals Served

1 Pathway to Healing Event

161 Individuals Served

221 Phone & Email Requests for Support



Community & Training Events

6 Community Events

365 Individuals Served

8 Training Events

170 Individuals Served



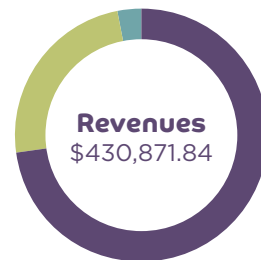
Crisis Response Program

6 School Crisis Events

153 Students Impacted

3 Community Crisis Events

122 Individuals Impacted



- 73%** Individual & Corporate Contributions
- 24%** Grants
- 3%** Programs/Trainings



- 75%** Programs
- 12%** Fundraising
- 13%** Operations & Administrative



Mission

Companions on a Journey Grief Support (COJ) provides ongoing support to the bereaved of all ages, surrounding them with **HOPE, STRENGTH and HEALING** as they create their new life balance.

Overview of Services

- School-Based Grief Support (K-12)
- Adult Support Programs
- Family Programs
- Community Education & Training
- Workplace Support

Values

COJ is committed to values that reflect who we are, what we value and how we work with others.

- **Faith.** Our faith inspires us to uphold respect, connection, and compassion in all interactions, allowing us to be a source of hope and healing.
- **Courage.** We recognize the courage it takes to grieve and we honor it by continually deepening and strengthening the support we offer.
- **Stewardship.** We are committed to responsible stewardship, ensuring that our resources, relationships, and efforts are managed with care.



Survey Results

School-Based Program

84% reported that their COJ grief group was helpful or very helpful this school year. When asked what was most helpful, students consistently said:

1. Talking and Emotional Expression



2. Community and Belonging



3. Shared Experiences and Validation



This group has made me feel not so alone. I feel accepted, found ways to cope, and enjoy others who understand.
- Student, School-Based Program

Knowing others go through similar struggles and hearing their stories reassures participants that their emotions are valid.

Students appreciate the opportunity to talk openly about their grief, feelings, and experiences in a supportive, non-judgmental space.

The group provides a strong sense of connection, understanding, and support, helping participants feel less alone.



Our facilitator is knowledgeable, compassionate, caring, and really gets to know our students.
- School Liaison, Hamilton City Schools

Adult & Family Program

73% of respondents reported that they were better able to cope with grief and loss in their life after attending COJ's grief support groups.

60% of respondents reported they were getting out and engaging in activities and events again after attending COJ's grief support groups.

Being with others in the same situation is supportive and encouraging. You can feel your feelings without judgment. Sharing coping strategies is also helpful.
- Widowed Group Participant

We're here for you!

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