

HELEN FITZGERALD, CT

Author and Lecturer

Helen Fitzgerald is an author and lecturer certified in thanatology by the Association for Death Education and Counseling. For 23 years she was the coordinator of the Grief Program for Mental Health Services in Fairfax County. There she conducted many groups for adults as well as grieving children from pre-school age through high school. She retired from that position in July of 2000. Currently she is the director of training for the American Hospice Foundation, providing training on grief issues for educators, social workers, and human resource personnel throughout the United States. Her books include *The Grieving Child* (1992, rev. 2003), *The Mourning Handbook* (1994) and *The Grieving Teen* (2000). Earlier she was the author of a chapter on children's grief groups for *Prevention in Community Practice* (1991). She has also written two manuals: *Grief at School* (1998) and *Grief at Work* (1999). She is a columnist for the websites beliefnet.com and americanhospice.org.

Ms. Fitzgerald has appeared on the CBS *Morning Show* and NBC *Today Show*, and consulted for the ABC series, *Full House*.

Earlier in her career Ms. Fitzgerald served for 10 years as a creative therapist in the psychiatric department of Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church, VA

Washingtonian Magazine named Ms. Fitzgerald as one of the top Washington psychotherapists in 1998. She has been called upon to address crisis situations at schools and organizations in the Washington area, including the World Bank, the US Congress, and Children's Hospital. After the World Trade Center attack she worked with New York City firefighters on ways to help victims' children. Ms. Fitzgerald has conducted training sessions in grief for the National Conference of School Psychologists as well as chapters of that conference throughout the country. She has also trained personnel at the Naval District of Washington and the U.S. Marine Corps at Quantico, VA. Ms. Fitzgerald is a former board member of the Association for Death Education and Counseling, which presented her in 1999 with its annual Clinical Services Award. Also in 1999 she was presented the Community Service Award of the Social Work Association of Fairfax County, Virginia. She serves on the Advisory board of Haven of Northern Virginia. Her biography appears in *Who's Who in America*.

Throughout her career Ms. Fitzgerald has carried her message on the universality of grief to teachers and counselors working with children of all ethnic and religious groups. These have ranged from the largely-African American school systems of New York and the District of Columbia to the multi-cultural school systems of the Southwest with many hispanic and American Indian children. In the Phoenix area alone she has conducted training for personnel of 00 different school districts in ways to address children's grief in the light of cultural differences. At the same time she has trained teachers and counselors of many different religious groups, carrying the same message on the universality of grief.