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Winner of The Blair L. Sadler International Healing Arts Competition 2004
Professional Participatory Arts Category
The Society for the Arts in Healthcare

Prayer Flags for Sophia

Prayer Flags for Healing™ are inspired by the traditional prayer flags of Tibet. They provide a unique opportunity to participate in supporting patients and their families who are in crisis. Making a prayer flag for a patient allows the friend or family member a way to share feelings of love and support that may be hard to say any other way.

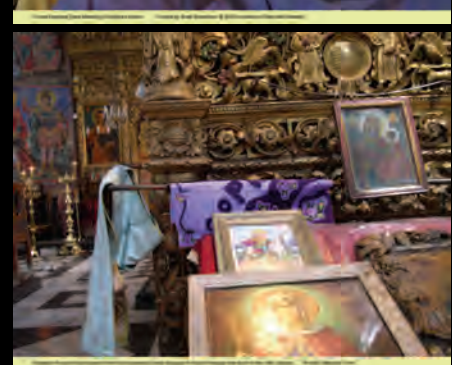
As a participatory art project, Prayer Flags for Sophia gave children, friends, family and caregivers a safe way to touch their hearts and say what they needed to Sophia and her family.

The flags were hung in the house as a way to have the loving community surround Sophia and her family all of the time. The flags brought positive thoughts, good wishes and beauty to Sophia's home which had been transformed into a hospice with assistance from Pathways Home Health Continuous Care and Hospice.

The flags provided a link for people to connect with one another as a community and became the basis of a strong foundation that has provided the support that this family needed to cope and get through this very difficult year.

Besides supporting the family and enhancing Sophia's health care the flags were a remarkable inspiration to many including people who took the prayer flags to distant parts of the world including Tibet and Bulgaria.

Simple colored pieces of cotton cloth were decorated with paints, glitter, pens, buttons, feathers, charms, natural materials and what ever was available. When completed the flags were hung at the entrance of the home and in the main living area where the daily care of Sophia and medical care meetings take place.



"Just a simple idea and a young child in need is all that is needed to inspire the creation of beauty, love, and interconnectedness."

—Robin Modlin, Artist

"The creative outpouring and community manifested in the prayer flags that afternoon, has grown since then. Our home has been transformed from an empty nest to a sacred space of light, hope and love. Sophia's Garden continues to thrive as a home hospice, health care and medical research center, community incubator, artists' retreat and sanctuary. Blessings for Sophia reach beyond geographical and physical boundaries. Like pollen in the wind, they propagate the essence of the human spirit: the quest for meaning and healing."

—Karen Herzog, Sophia's Mother

"The prayer flags changed the dynamic of our home dramatically. Instead of Sophia being the focus of our community's fear and helplessness, she became a wellspring of creativity. In creating the flags—adults, children, neighbors, friends and caregivers each found a way to tangibly express their compassion and faith."

—Richard Sachs, Sophia's Father

"For me, this is the essence of Healing Arts."

—Barbara M. Sourkes PhD
Director Palliative Care, LPCH at Stanford



Sophia's Garden
Foundation
HEALING IN COMMUNITY

www.sophiasgarden.org