

## “Helping Kids Deal With Death & Tragedy”

1. Be \_\_\_\_\_ with them.

2. Use appropriate \_\_\_\_\_.

*“Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment...”*

*- Hebrews 9:27*

3. Allow them to \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Allow your child to be \_\_\_\_\_.

*“There is a...time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance...”*

*- Ecclesiastes 3:4*

*“You can’t heal what you can’t feel.” – John Bradshaw*

5. Be aware of your own need to \_\_\_\_\_.

6. Grieve \_\_\_\_\_.

*“Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.” - Romans 12:15*

7. Don’t \_\_\_\_\_ an emotional response.

8. Expect \_\_\_\_\_.

9. \_\_\_\_\_ together.

*“Since God assured us, “I’ll never let you down, never walk off and leave you,”*

*– Hebrews 13:5 (The Message)*

10. Remember that grieving is a \_\_\_\_\_, not an \_\_\_\_\_.

### Stages Of Grief

1) D\_\_\_\_\_

2) A\_\_\_\_\_

3) B\_\_\_\_\_

4) D\_\_\_\_\_

5) A\_\_\_\_\_

## **The Developmental Differences In Dealing With Grief And Loss** *(taken from “It’s Okay To Cry” by Yvonne Butler Clark)*

### **How Preschoolers Express Grief**

- Bedwetting and thumb sucking
- Clinging to adults
- Exaggerated fears and excessive crying
- Temper tantrums and Stubbornness
- Regression

### **Helping the Grieving Preschooler**

- Answer the child’s question honestly and simply; allow them to talk about the loss; help them share their fears and worries.
- Provide simple routines.
- Give the child affection and nurturing; attempt to connect with them.
- Provide more opportunities for play.
- Be patient with regressive behaviors such as thumb sucking.
- Provide opportunities for the expression of painful emotions through play, creative outlets, and talk. Teach them to recognize and name their full range of feelings.

### **How Elementary School-Age Children Express Grief**

- School and learning problems ; fighting/anger
- Preoccupation with the loss and related worries; daydreaming; trouble paying attention
- Bedwetting; regression; developmental delays
- Eating and sleeping problems (overeating, refusing to eat, nightmares, sleepiness)

### **Helping the Grieving Elementary School-Age Child**

- Keep tasks simple. Explain things before they experience them - new neighborhood, school, church, family routines and changes.
- Provide a structured environment that is predictable and consistent; limit choices; introduce small, manageable choices over time.
- Contain acting out behavior; insist that children express their wants, needs, and feelings with words, not by acting out.
- Encourage them to let you know when they are worried or having a difficult time.

### **How Pre-Teens and Early Adolescents Express Grief**

- Physical symptoms (headaches, stomachaches, sleeping and eating disorders, hypochondria) Wide mood swings
- Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness
- Increase in risk-taking and self-destructive behaviors
- Anger; aggression; fighting; oppositional behavior
- Withdrawal from adults; Depression; sadness
- Lack of concentration and attention
- Identity confusion; testing limits

### **Helping the Grieving Pre-Teen and Early Adolescent**

- Accept that they will experience mood swings and physical symptoms.
- Encourage them to honestly recognize their painful feelings and find positive outlets in physical and creative activities.
- Listen for the feelings behind their words and actions and respond with empathy.
- Be truthful and factual in explaining the loss.
- Help them develop and maintain their sense of identity.