



Helping Children Deal with Death and Grief

Children, as well as adults, experience shock, confusion and pain at the loss of a loved one. Parents can reduce their children's anxiety and pain by providing guidance and emotional support.

SOME SIGNS OF GRIEF ARE

- Feelings of guilt
- Mood swings
- Hostility/aggressiveness
- Poor school performance
- Wish for own death
- Sleeplessness
- Depression
- Withdrawal

HOW TO HELP A CHILD DEAL WITH DEATH

Tell them the truth: Give direct and simple answers for the absence or disappearance of a loved one. If appropriate, discuss terminal illness.

Don't confuse them: "Going to sleep" and "gone away" are not the same as dying. Children might expect the deceased to come back. Explain that death is final.

Share experiences: Allow children to attend a memorial or funeral, but don't force them. Let them know what to expect. Be ready to answer their questions.

Face grief: Let children cry and vent feelings to encourage healing. Discuss fears.

Reassure them: Hold children. Offer reassurance that someone will always be there to love them.

Encourage the creative expression of grief: Write letters, songs or draw pictures to say goodbye

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF SO YOU CAN TAKE CARE OF YOUR CHILD.

WHO TO CALL FOR HELP

Center for Community Support and Research
1-800-445-0116

For more online tip cards, visit www.KCSL.org under the "Resources" tab.



Kansas Children's
Service League

Parenting questions? Call the Parent Helpline:
1-800-CHILDREN or email/text 1800children@kcsl.org



Prevent Child Abuse
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