

Resources

For more information about grief and local support groups, call:

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) -Western New York

202-2783
www.afsp.org

A Caring Place (bereavement program for children and their families)

475-8800

The Center for Compassion & Healing at Lifetime Care

475-8800

Crime Victim's Resource Center

753-2872

The Consortium for Trauma, Illness & Grief in School

753-2877
www.tigconsortium.org

Kids Adjusting Through Support (KATS)

624-5555



A program of the
Monroe County Office of Mental Health
1099 Jay Street, Building J
Rochester, NY 14611

For more information, please contact
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Grief: Coping with Loss



The Consortium on Trauma,
Illness & Grief in schools

585-753-2877

What is Grief?



Grief is a normal emotional response to loss. Whether one has lost a family member, friend or even a pet, our natural human response is one of grief and

sadness. Our experience of grief will be affected by the whether the death was sudden or unexpected, the cause of the death, and our relationship to the person who died. Each person's expression of grief is unique and there is no "right or wrong" way to grieve.

Children and Grief

*"If one is old enough to love, one is old enough to grieve."
- Alan D. Wolfelt*

Just as adults grieve, so do children. A child's grief experience will be based on their development and personality.

Common Symptoms of Grief

Physical: Chest pains, stomach pains, headaches, & nausea are common. You may feel fatigue or have difficulty sleeping. Concentrating may not be easy & you might feel restless.

Emotional: Feelings of sadness, anger, guilt, anxiety, loneliness, relief, irritability and numbness are all normal. Strong feelings may come suddenly, without warning.

Social: During times of grief some people withdraw and lack interest to engage with others. Others become more dependent and do not want to be alone. You may also be more sensitive and experience stress in relationships.

Spiritual: Especially when a death was sudden or traumatic, it is not uncommon to question spiritual values or even lose faith. Some people also experience anger with or feel betrayal by God or their Spiritual Force.

Coping with Grief

- Grieve at your own pace. Be patient with yourself
- Ask for and accept help when needed
- Spend time with people who provide you with support
- Eat, sleep and exercise regularly
- Do something that you enjoy
- Keep to a routine
- Journal
- If you follow a religious tradition, engage in mourning rituals and/or prayer

Common Feelings, Thoughts & Behaviors of a Grieving Child

- Crying at unexpected times
- Physical complaints – stomach-aches, headaches, fatigue
- Retelling events of the deceased's death & funeral
- Difficulty concentrating at school
- Needing to be near an adult all the time
- Worrying about safety, other people getting sick or dying
- Being angry at everybody and everything
- Not talking about the deceased or loss at all

Needs of a Grieving Child

- To be allowed to grieve
- To have their loss acknowledged
- Normalization of grief
- Accurate information
- Careful listening
- Help with overwhelming feelings
- Continued routine activities
- Opportunities to remember



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