



Activities to Support You and Your Grieving Family

Support for Mother's Day

We know that for many grieving families, Mother's Day can be a particularly challenging day. With the added anxiety about Coronavirus you and your children may find it even more difficult. Here are some ways you can remember mom or another important person, together as a family and share some of the many feelings you may be grappling with. We encourage you to do these activities together, talk and share the experience. We are always here to support you at CaringMatters and look forward to hearing from you!

Warmly,
Gilly Cannon
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Make / Do

Butterfly Messages: A note to Mom

You can still express your love for mom, even if she has died. Here is a way to make a card and/or write a message to her. Here is a simple way to make a butterfly using a piece of letter size paper and your hand to draw around. When you have decorated your butterfly you might like to create a butterfly bush to attach it to and add all your family's butterflies to it.

The directions for making a butterfly are on the next page, but here's an example of the finished project.

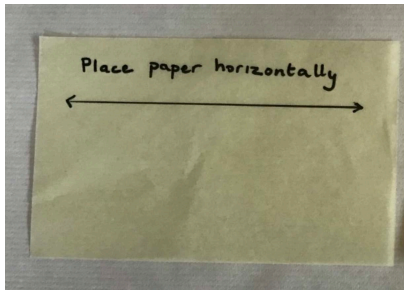
Visit <https://www.caringmatters.org/resourcesforfamilies> for more resources to help children and families.



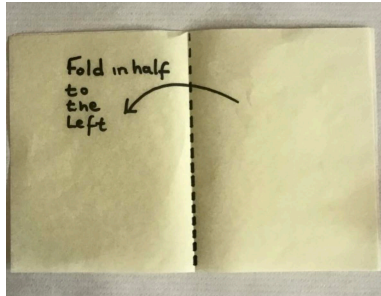
For more ideas for support on Mother's Day, visit https://www.dougy.org/docs/Mothers_Day_and_Fathers_Day.pdf

Butterfly Messages: A Note to Mom

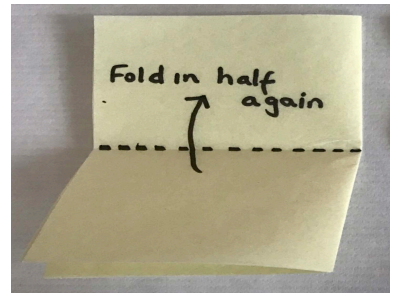
Step 1: Place paper horizontally.



Step 2: Fold in half to the left.



Step 3: Fold in half again.



Step 4: Place thumb on fold; put fingers together.

Step 5: Draw around hand; paper is folded at the bottom.

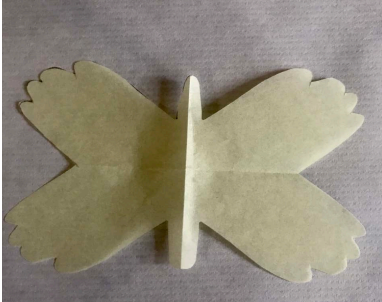
Step 6: Cut on outline around the hand.



Step 7: Unfold into butterfly shape.

A beautiful family of butterflies

Step 8: Decorate your butterfly with a message to Mom.



Optional: Gather butterflies other members of your home have made and create a butterfly bush with messages to Mom. Use a stick from your yard or from around a tree near your home.



Beautiful butterflies made by two of our friends.



Read / Listen

Feelings about missing mommy

Here is a poem and a story to help you find words to describe your grief. Which of the feelings mentioned feel true for you? You can share those feelings on your butterfly if you have made one.

For Grief by John Donohue

When you lose someone you love,
Your life becomes strange,
The ground beneath you becomes fragile,
Your thoughts make your eyes unsure; And
some dead echo drags your voice down
Where words have no confidence
Your heart has grown heavy with loss;
And though this loss has wounded others too,
No one knows what has been taken from you
When the silence of absence deepens.

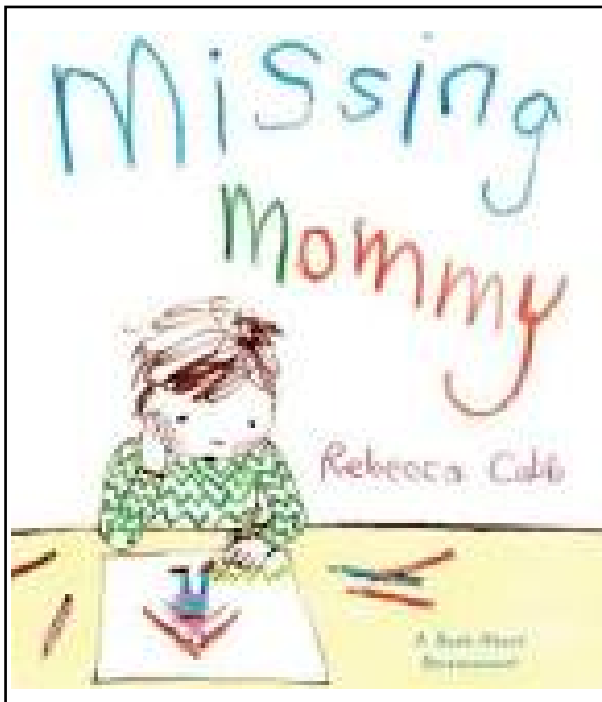
Flickers of guilt kindle regret
For all that was left unsaid or undone.

It becomes hard to trust yourself.
All you can depend on now is that
Sorrow will remain faithful to itself.
More than you, it knows its way
And will find the right time
To pull and pull the rope of grief
Until that coiled hill of tears
Has reduced to its last drop.

Gradually, you will learn acquaintance
With the invisible form of your departed; And
when the work of grief is done,
The wound of loss will heal
And you will have learned
To wean your eyes
From that gap in the air
And be able to enter the hearth
In your soul where your loved one
Has awaited your return
All the time.

Read / Listen
Feelings about missing mommy

Missing Mommy by Rebecca Cobb



"Some time ago, we said good-bye to Mommy. I am not sure where she has gone."

Honest and straightforward, this touching story explores the many emotions a bereaved child may experience, from anger and guilt to sadness and bewilderment. Ultimately, *Missing Mommy* focuses on the positive—the recognition that the child is not alone but still part of a family that loves and supports him.

Listen to the story here: <https://youtu.be/7xJ9jqAhqzY>

Think / Talk
Remember and Share

If there are things you have done to remember mom in previous years, like go to the cemetery or get together with other family members, because of the Coronavirus you may not be able to do them this year. Plan together how you might want to mark the day. Let your children make suggestions. Talking about and remembering your person who died can be an important part of processing your grief.

You can begin a conversation by doing the art activity together and talking about why you chose certain colors or decorations. You might notice that although you all made a butterfly from the same instructions, how you each decorated it or used it is unique just like your grief. You might share the messages you wrote on the butterflies, eat one of mom's favorite foods, listen to a song she loved or share things that made her laugh or that she taught you. All these ideas are ways to recognize that the love you have for mom remains in your heart.