Tips for Supporting Children who are Grieving

Children often grieve differently from adults. When a loved one dies, it is often a child’s first experience with death. We hope you will find the contents of this document helpful as you support your grieving child(ren).

1. There is no timeline for grief. Even children from the same family can grieve differently and for varied amounts of time.

2. Reassure children that they will always have someone to take care of them.

3. Children often fear that if they talk about the deceased they will make others sad. Talk openly about the person who died and share memories.

4. Understand children may experience waves of grief and sadness. Be patient as children often don’t know how to express or even understand their feelings.

5. Listen without interrupting or trying to “fix” what they are feeling. Children want to know they have been heard.

6. Be reassured that children are resilient and they will eventually settle into a “new normal” without the physical presence of the person who died.

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