

GRIEF RESOURCE GUIDE
Helping parents and children handle grief.

10 Ways To Help Yourself With Grief.....Page 2

The Adult's Role In Helping Young People With Grief.....Page 3

Ways Parents Can Help Their Children With Grief.....Page 4

Hamilton County Resources.....Page 5

Web Resources.....Page 6



10 WAYS TO HELP YOURSELF WITH GRIEF

1. Let Others Help You
 - Tap bonds with friends, teachers and counselors
 - Trust others to help
 - Share feelings and pain
2. Remember It's Normal To Feel What Seems Abnormal
 - It is common to feel that you're 'going crazy'
 - Personal disorganization is common
 - Anger and fear will be present
3. Express Thoughts and Feelings
 - Words are most helpful and least harmful
 - Crying is healthy – it is ok to cry
 - Do not fear losing control
4. Do Not Try to Avoid Grief
 - Avoiding grief adds misery
 - Lean into your feelings
 - Grief postponed is acceptance postponed
5. Reach Out
 - Sharing is our responsibility
 - Do not assume others know what you need
 - Choose to be healed
6. Help Others
 - Memorialize
 - Do more than expected
 - Volunteer
7. Rise Above Bitterness
 - Bitterness displaces blame
 - Grudges deplete energy
 - Forgive self and others
8. Expect to Regress
 - Grief is erratic
 - Special times can be hard
9. Maintain Physical Strength
 - Have healthy eating and sleeping habits
 - Run, play, and participate in sports
 - Find ways to relax
10. Deal With Your Needs and Immediate Problems
 - Decide what your needs are
 - Seek healthy ways to meet your needs

THE ADULT'S ROLE IN HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH GRIEF

- Provide a supportive and safe environment
- Provide a consistent physical presence whenever possible
- Accept and validate the current and natural feeling responses of your teen
- Be aware of double messages the young person may receive, and prevent them from occurring. (For example, “It's okay to cry. You can cry whenever you feel like it,” and “Now, straighten up there. Everyone needs you to be strong and get back to normal.”)
- Help your teen understand that physical symptoms are a normal response when grieving
- Provide honest and specific answers to questions about death and dying
- If you do not know the answer to a specific question, or if a question cannot be answered, be honest with your child
- Understand the anger is a natural part of grief, so that through permissive listening, the bereaved teenager learns that feelings are not judged as being good or bad, but are accepted as real and present
- Talk openly about memories--good or bad
- Model expressions of feelings to provide permission for your teen to not be afraid or embarrassed to talk about feelings that arise

Adapted from Carla Goette, Chattanooga Funeral Home

WAYS PARENTS CAN HELP THEIR CHILDREN WITH GRIEF

- Talk with your child/children. Provide simple accurate information to questions. Allow them to tell their stories about what happened. This is especially critical if they witnessed the event.
- Talk with your child/children about your own feelings. Let him/her know that you can feel sadness, confusion, etc.
- Listen to what your child/children say and how they say it. Repeating your children's words and recognizing fear, anxiety, and insecurity is very helpful. For instance, you can say, "You are afraid that..." or "You wonder if the same thing could happen to you or your friends." This helps both you and the children clarify feelings.
- Reassure your child/children: "We are together." "We care about you." "We will take care of you."
- Hold your teen. Provide comfort. Touching is as important for teenagers as it is for children during times of grieving.
- Spend extra time with your child/children during the next few weeks. Talk and offer assurance.
- Observe your child/children. Listen to what is said and how your teen interacts with his/her friends (in the car, for example). Frequently, children express feelings of fear or anger while you are in proximity even if you are not necessarily the one being addressed.
- Provide experiences to relieve tensions. Physical activity relieves stress. Encourage your child to work out or continue in sports. If there is a lot of anger, give him/her something safe to hit, like a pillow.
- Allow children to mourn and grieve. The gift of time is a precious gift.

Adapted from the School Psychologists' web page, Bartow County School System, Cartersville, Georgia. Copyright 1997-1998. All Rights Reserved.

HAMILTON COUNTY RESOURCES

Who to Call When There is a Crisis:

- 911
(for emergencies)
- Mobile Crisis, 584-8577
(Weekdays: 9 a.m. – midnight. Weekends: 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.)
- Crisis Intervention/Suicide/Referrals, 281-CARE (281-2273)
- Psychiatric Evaluation and Response Center (PERC), Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, 636-4124
- Psychiatric Emergency Services (University Hospital), 584-8577

Who to Call for On-going Counseling Services:

- Mental Health Access Point (MHAP), 558-8888
(‘Front door’ of mental health services for children and adults in Hamilton County.)
- Fernside Center for Grieving Children & Families, 745-0111
- Jewish Family Services, 469-1188
- Reference the back of your health insurance card for a telephone number for mental health services.

WEB RESOURCES

<http://griefnet.org>

<http://www.childrensgrief.net/>

<http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/svc/alpha/p/psychiatry/teens/health.htm>

<http://kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/behavior/suicide.html>