



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.

Over
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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 kcsf.org
under the "Resources" tab.**



Kansas Children's Service League

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



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