

Fairhaven Public Schools
GRIEF SUPPORT for Children and Families

For immediate Grief Support:

Contact your School Counselor for support and referral, if needed.

Other Local Agencies offering Support:

South Coast Bereavement Services <i>Counseling (Individual and Group)</i> <i>Camp Angel Wings</i>	(508) 973-3227
NBCFS (individual, group, and family counseling) <i>Amanda Phillips, Director-School Based</i> <i>Chanda Coutinho, Site Director</i>	(508) 996-8572 http://child-familyservices.org/new-bedford/
Greater New Bedford Trauma Response Network	(508) 993-6242
New Bedford Area Grief Support Group Pastor David Lima, Coordinator	(508) 992-7505 beni@stmarysdartmouth.org
Coalition to Support Grieving Students	https://grievingstudents.org/
Comfort Zone Camp	https://www.comfortzonecamp.org

If having a mental health crisis requiring support:

New Bedford Crisis Center/Mobile Crisis	Pam Bolarino, ES Director: (508) 996-3154 Matthew Boyd, Mobile Crisis Director: (508) 996-3154 http://child-familyservices.org/emergency-services-crisis-center/
Crisis Text Line	Text HOME to 741741 https://www.crisistextline.org/

How to deal with the grieving process

While grieving a loss is an inevitable part of life, there are ways to help cope with the pain, come to terms with your grief, and eventually, find a way to pick up the pieces and move on with your life.

1. Acknowledge your pain.
2. Accept that grief can trigger many different and unexpected emotions.
3. Understand that your grieving process will be unique to you.
4. Seek out face-to-face support from people who care about you.
5. Support yourself emotionally by taking care of yourself physically.
6. Recognize the difference between grief and depression.

Guidelines to keep in mind (talking to children)

The words you choose will vary depending upon the child's age and developmental stage, but experts agree that no matter what the age of the child there are certain guidelines you should stick to:

- Follow their lead.
 - The kinds of questions and concerns that children have can be very different from those of adults.
 - Giving children too much information can overwhelm them. It is better to let them ask questions and then answer in the best (and most developmentally appropriate) way you can.
 - Don't be surprised if young children are mostly concerned about themselves. That is simply how young children are.
- Encourage children to express their feelings.
 - Do not try to "protect" or "shelter" children by attempting to hide your own sadness. They will invariably know that something is wrong, but will be left feeling alone and confused.
 - Hiding your own grief can also make children feel like the sadness they may be feeling is bad.
 - However, try not to let children see you at your most upset moments, as they may begin to worry about you or feel insecure.
- Don't use euphemisms. Avoid phrases like "passed away," "gone," "we lost him."
 - Kids tend to be very literal, and this kind of fuzzy language leaves them anxious, scared and often confused. Or conversely, it may lead them to believe the deceased will come back and that death is not permanent.
- Maintain normal routines as much as possible.
 - Grief takes time but children benefit from the security of regular routines and knowing that life goes on.
- Memorialize the person who died.
 - Remembering is part of grieving and part of healing. This can be as simple as sharing memories of the person who died or bringing up the name of the

person who died so that your child knows it's not taboo to talk about and remember that person. It is important to keep photos around, too.

Here are a few activities that may help you cope while grieving:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Go for a walk | Have a game night |
| Call an old friend | Get a haircut |
| Take a nap | Go out to eat |
| Breathe | Join a new club |
| Daydream | Go through pictures |
| Do yoga | Make a scrapbook |
| Write in your journal | Spend time with pets |
| Color in a book | Make a shadow box |
| Brush your teeth | Buy yourself flowers |
| Tidy up a room | Listen to music |
| Organize your day | Look at the stars |
| Reflect in gratitude | Eat a piece of fresh fruit |
| Watch a movie | Bake cookies |
| Eat a favorite meal | Explore a new hobby |
| Spend time cooking | Make a Memory Box |
| Meditate | Hone a skill you have |
| Go for a run | Stand out in the rain |
| Buy a new outfit | Pray |
| Listen to nature sounds | Stop and smell a flower |
| Write a letter | Knit/Crochet |
| Watch a documentary | Build a birdhouse |
| Take a shower | Rake Leaves/Cut Grass |
| Take a warm bath | Make a HandPrint |
| Read a book | Sort Buttons |
| Binge on Netflix | Draw a Picture |
| Watch favorite sports program | Press Flowers |
| Go for a hike | Clean |
| Go to the movies | Make a Christmas Ornament |
| Experience a live play | Vacuum house |
| Explore your city | Vacuum Car |
| Spend time at a museum | Wash your car |
| Go to a sports game | Explore a cause you believe in |
| GardenHave a picnic | Plan your short weekend trip |
| Watch funny videos | Take a short weekend trip |
| Do the laundry | Volunteer at a local shelter |
| Get a massage | Spend time with friends |
| Dust your house | |

Invite family over for a movie
Visit a local historical place
Attend classes you've always wanted
Appreciate the simple things
Write down favorite memories
Spend time with children
Attend religious/spiritual services
Do nothing and veg on the couch
Watch funny/cute youtube videos
Make a Sculptured Memory
Shop for memorialization items
Learn a new language
Volunteer for a cause you believe in
Knitting or a craft you enjoy
Indulge in Chocolate (or any sweet!)
Bring a gift to a neighbor
Look at pictures you enjoy
Take photos of nature
Watch the sunset/sunrise
Listen to a child's laughter
Draw boundaries with negative influences
Rearrange your furniture
Spend intimate time with your partner
Spend time with a friend

Commit yourself to a good cause
Discover a new place and visit it
Appreciate the small moments of calm
Spend time with horses
List 3 great qualities about yourself
Spend time with chickens
Buy a new book and read it from cover to cover
Take a step toward your goals
Try a new food you've never had before
Make vacation plans
Donate to a good cause
Teach a friend something new
Search for new inspirational quotes
Start a blog and write your story
Join a new community or meetup group
Spend time mindlessly browsing the web
Set aside 15 minutes in a quiet place and give yourself permission to grieve.
Attend a grief support group

The Stages of Grief

In 1969, psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross introduced what became known as the "five stages of grief." These stages of grief were based on her studies of the feelings of patients facing terminal illness, but many people have generalized them to other types of negative life changes and losses, such as the death of a loved one or a break-up.

The five stages of grief

1. Denial: "This can't be happening to me."
2. Anger: "Why is this happening? Who is to blame?"
3. Bargaining: "Make this not happen, and in return I will _____."
4. Depression: "I'm too sad to do anything."
5. Acceptance: "I'm at peace with what happened."

Emotional symptoms of grief

Shock and disbelief.

Right after a loss, it can be hard to accept what happened. You may feel numb, have trouble believing that the loss really happened, or even deny the truth. If someone you love has died, you may keep expecting them to show up, even though you know they're gone.

Sadness.

Profound sadness is probably the most universally experienced symptom of grief. You may have feelings of emptiness, despair, yearning, or deep loneliness. You may also cry a lot or feel emotionally unstable.

Guilt.

You may regret or feel guilty about things you did or didn't say or do. You may also feel guilty about certain feelings (e.g. feeling relieved when the person died after a long, difficult illness). After a death, you may even feel guilty for not doing something to prevent the death, even if there was nothing more you could have done.

Anger.

Even if the loss was nobody's fault, you may feel angry and resentful. If you lost a loved one, you may be angry with yourself, God, the doctors, or even the person who died for abandoning you. You may feel the need to blame someone for the injustice that was done to you.

Fear.

A significant loss can trigger a host of worries and fears. You may feel anxious, helpless, or insecure. You may even have panic attacks. The death of a loved one can trigger fears about your own mortality, of facing life without that person, or the responsibilities you now face alone.

Physical symptoms of Grief

We often think of grief as a strictly emotional process, but grief often involves physical problems, including:

- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Lowered immunity
- Weight loss or weight gain
- Aches and pains
- Insomnia

Children's Books on Grief, Loss and Death

Sometimes a story is the best way to open a dialogue with a child. Often reading a story can help children know they are not alone and normalize what they are experiencing. It can offer a safe way to open a dialogue with children about death and grief. Here is a list of 64 children's books about grief. The books are primarily for ages 3-10, but often can be used for older children as well.

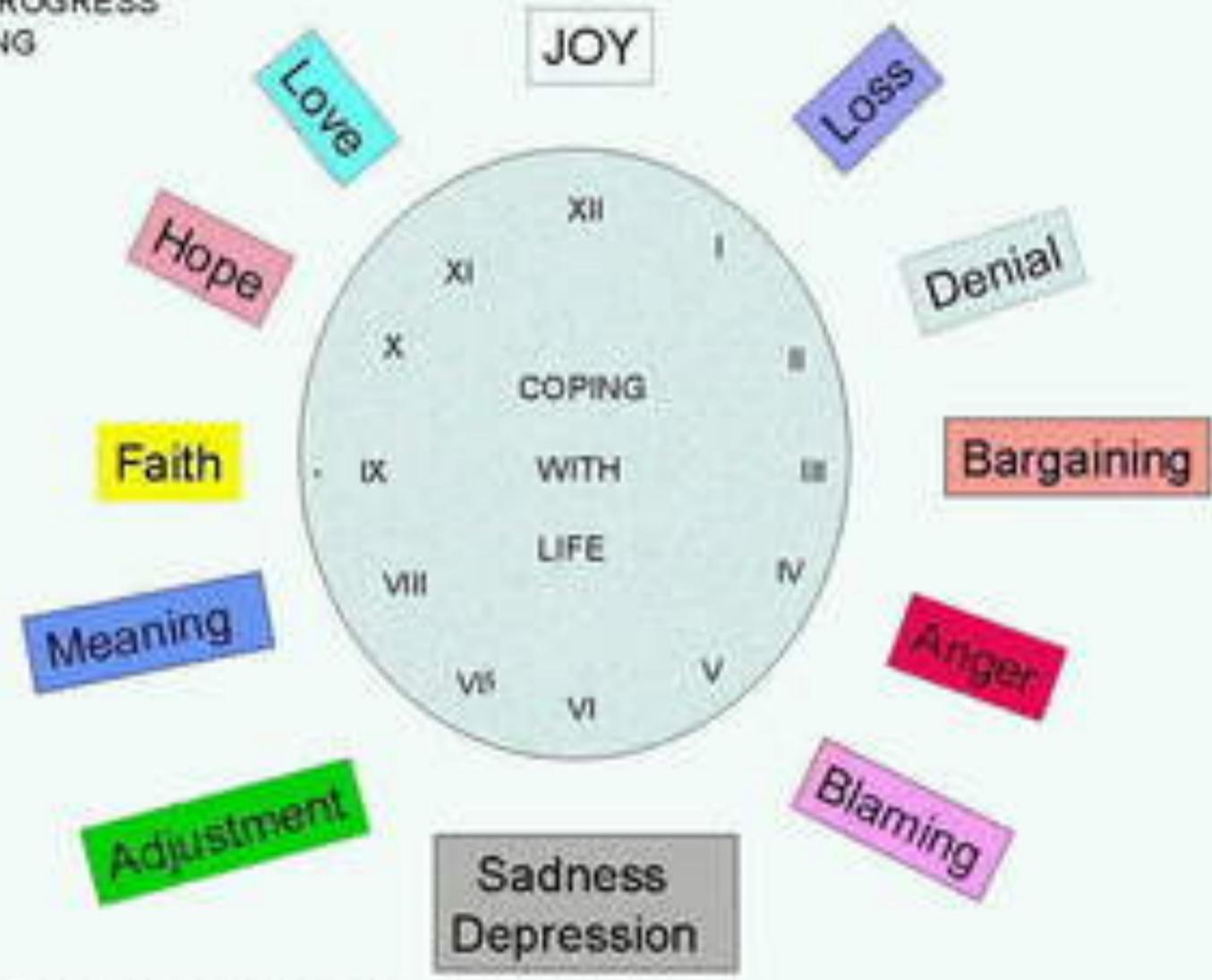
1. Lifetimes: The Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children (kids 5+)
2. The Invisible String (kids 3+)
3. Everett Anderson's Goodbye (Reading Rainbow) (kids 5-8)
4. The Tenth Good Thing About Barney (kids 6-9)
5. I'll Always Love You (kids 3-7)
6. When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death (Dino Life Guides for Families) (kids 4-8)
7. I Miss You: A First Look at Death (First Look at Books) (kids 4+)
8. The Saddest Time (kids 6-9)
9. Tear Soup: A Recipe for Healing After Loss (kids 8+)
10. The Fall of Freddie the Leaf: A Story of Life for All Ages (kids 4+)
11. Gentle Willow: A Story for Children About Dying (kids 4+)
12. Where Are You? A Child's Book About Loss (kids 4-8)
13. Samantha Jane's Missing Smile: A Story About Coping With the Loss of a Parent (kids 5+)
14. The Scar (kids 5-9)
15. A Terrible Thing Happened (kids 4+)
16. The Elephant in the Room: A Children's Book for Grief and Loss (kids 4+)
17. The Boy Who Didn't Want to Be Sad (kids 4+)
18. I Wish I Could Hold Your Hand...: A Child's Guide to Grief and Loss (Little Imp Books) (kids 9+)
19. Water Bugs and Dragonflies: Explaining Death to Young Children (kids 4+)

20. When Your Grandparent Dies: A Child's Guide to Good Grief (Elf-Help Books for Kids) (kids 5+)
21. Someone I Love Died (kids 4-8)
22. What Happened When Grandma Died? (kids 4+)
23. Always and Forever (kids 4+)
24. Badger's Parting Gifts (kids 4-8)
25. Ghost Wings (kids 5+)
26. Finding Grandpa Everywhere: A Young Child Discovers Memories of a Grandparent (kids 7+)
27. The Grandpa Tree (kids 3+)
28. Sad Isn't Bad: A Good-Grief Guidebook for Kids Dealing with Loss (Elf-Help Books for Kids) (kids 6+)
29. Nana Upstairs and Nana Downstairs (Picture Puffins) (kids 4-8)
30. Daddy, Up and Down: Sisters Grieve the Loss of Their Daddy (kids 4-8)
31. Saying Goodbye to Daddy (kids 4+)
32. The Angel with the Golden Glow: A Family's Journey Through Loss and Healing (kids 4+)
33. Where's Jess: For Children Who Have a Brother or Sister Die (kids 3-6)
34. A Taste of Blackberries (kids 8-12)
35. Bridge to Terabithia (kids 8-12)
36. My Grandson Lew (kids 4-6)
37. Aarvy Aardvark Finds Hope: A Read Aloud Story for People of All Ages About Loving and Losing, Friendship and Hope (as the title says, people of all ages!)
38. The Empty Place: A Child's Guide Through Grief (Let's Talk) (kids 5-10)
39. Dancing on the Moon (kids 3+)
40. Lost and Found: Remembering a Sister (kids 6+)
41. Stacy Had a Little Sister (A Concept Book) (kids 4+)

42. Ragtail Remembers: A Story That Helps Children Understand Feelings of Grief (kids 4+)
43. Goodbye Mousie (kids 4-8)
44. Remembering Crystal (kids 3+)
45. Rudi's Pond (kids 5-8)
46. The Memory String (kids 4-8)
47. Sammy in the Sky (kids 4-8)
48. Where Do People Go When They Die? (kids 3-8)
49. Chester Raccoon and the Acorn Full of Memories (kids 3-8)
50. Her Mother's Face (kids 4-8)
51. Remembering Mama (kids 4+)
52. Old Pig (Picture Puffin) (kids 3-8)
53. Pearl's Marigolds for Grandpa (kids 3-7)
54. Saying Goodbye to Lulu (kids 3-6)
55. The Mountains of Tibet (kids 7+)
56. Rabbityness (kids 3-7)
57. I Wish I Could Hold Your Hand...: A Child's Guide to Grief and Loss (Little Imp Books) (kids 9+)
58. Can You Hear Me Smiling?: A Child Grieves a Sister (kids 8+)
59. The Copper Tree (kids 5-8)
60. Everybody Feels Sad (kids 4+)
61. Grief is Like a Snowflake (kids 4+)
62. My Baby Big Sister: A Book for Children Born Subsequent to a Pregnancy Loss (kids 4-8)
63. Ladder to the Moon (kids 4-8)
64. Missing Mommy: A Book About Bereavement (kids 3-8).

****These books may be available on the 'Audible App' for free or through Amazon.**

TIME & PROGRESS
IN COPING



Copyright (C) 1996 by Harold Vane, MD Teresa Sales

