



Tips for Caregivers

Helping School - Aged Children with Traumatic Grief

1. My feelings about death are confusing. Sometimes I feel okay and other times I feel sad, scared, or just empty or numb. It's really hard to make the scary and sad feelings go away.

You can help me when you: talk about your feelings and encourage me to talk about mine as long as I feel comfortable.

2. Sometimes my upset feelings come out as bad behavior.

You can help me when you: help me do things to feel calm, get back to my routine, and have fun again. Be patient until I feel OK.

3. I have trouble concentrating, paying attention, and sleeping sometimes, because what happened is on my mind.

You can help me when you: understand that thoughts about what happened get stuck in my mind. Help me relax at bedtime by reading stories or listening to music and reminding me that you keep me safe.

4. I might have physical reactions like stomach aches, headaches, feeling my heart pounding, and breathing too fast.

You can help me when you: help me do things that make me feel calm, take my mind off things, or slow down my breathing.

5. Sometimes I wonder if the death was my fault.

You can help me when you: reassure me that it was not my fault.

6. I sometimes think the same thing will happen to me or other people I love.

You can help me when you; remind me about the things we do to stay safe and take care of ourselves. Help me remember all the people who take care of me.

7. I keep thinking about what happened over and over in my head.

You can help me when you: listen to what is on my mind. Tell me honestly what happened, using words I can understand. Do not let me see it on the TV or other media if the story is in the news.

8. Sometimes I don't like to think or talk about the person who died because it is too hard. I may not tell you everything because I don't want to upset you.

You can help me when you: don't make me talk about what happened. Don't get mad if I don't want to talk about it or about the person.

9. I don't like to go some places or do some things that remind me of the person who died, or of how my life has changed since the person died, because I get upset.

You can help me when you: don't make me go places if it still makes me too upset or scared.

10. I have trouble remembering good things about the person because I remember other things that make me too mad, sad, or scared and they get in the way.

You can help me when you: understand that I am still too scared and sad to think about the happy times right now. Help me to feel better.

Adapted from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network



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