

CHILDREN GRIEVE, TOO

Helping Children Cope with Grief

INTRODUCTION

Grieve professionals are frequently asked, 'at what age should a child attend a funeral or memorial service?' "As soon as a child is born," is their response. Grief and mourning are love's sorrow. They believe that a family who loves together also grieves together. We don't have a choice-we will grieve. Our choice is *how* we grieve. Our choice is *how* we teach our children to grieve. How they grieve their first loss will be a part of every grief they know for the rest of their lives.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT DEATH IS

Having a clear understanding about what death is good preparation for ourselves as we approach death and grieving with our children.

Death is something that can be explained clearly and gently to any child. And no one can do it better than you. Older children will have questions about details. Younger children need a simple explanation.

You may want to start out with:

- + When people died, all their body parts stop working.
- + They don't feel or think anymore.
- + They don't hurt. They don't breathe in and out anymore.
- + They don't eat anymore and they don't go to the bathroom.
- + They are not sad or scared or happy. They are dead.

Dead is not at all like sleeping. When you sleep, all your body parts work. You dream and you wake up in the morning. A dead person never wakes up. The dead person's body will feel different, too. Their body will be cool and solid. It will feel a lot like the cover of a book.

Because God loves us and cares for us, he wants us to be with Him forever. Through the life and death and resurrection of His son, Jesus Christ, we are blessed that when one dies, they no longer live with us but will live with God forever.

The part of that person that laughed and lived is gone now. What is left is just the body; like a schoolhouse without any children or a peanut shell without the peanut. Everything that lives must die at some time. Leaves die in the autumn and fall from the trees. Animals live awhile and then die. Usually people live a long, long time. Sometimes accidents happen and people die very suddenly. However someone dies, we care for that person's body. The part that was alive may be gone, but the body is still here and is very important.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

As a parent, grandparent or any other person who loves a child, guiding children through grief can be frightening. There is a need to:

- † Protect the child
- † Make things better
- † Take away the hurt

The reality is that you can't do all those things. But you can be a guide and a teacher. You can tell your child it's all right to cry, that feeling said is okay and that it's also all right to play. You can say you will be there or another adult will be there to answer questions. You can explain funerals and memorial services, and believe it or not, you can be a very good and effective death educator.

To do that you will need to:

- † Be honest
- † Admit you don't know all the answers
- † Listen
- † Find some helpful resources
- † Be creative
- † And at times, you will need to have courage.

There are still many people who think children should not be told the truth. There are still many people who do not want children at funerals or memorial services. And there are still many people who do not want to believe that children grieve, too. The result of falsely trying to protect the child by talking in code or ignore the issue of death and grief, children will establish their own interpretations and truths.

Remember, these people will not be the ones who later have to explain to your child why she is denied the opportunity to be part of her family during a very important and life-changing time.

The first thing you need to know is how children of different ages react to loss. Consider the following chronological groupings when considering how to respond to grief with your own child. Additionally, each child, like each adult, grieves differently and according to her own personality. However, children do have behavioral stages where some grief reactions may be common. Knowing these occur, can help us support and care for our children.

INFANTS

While babies obviously don't have language skills and can't think about or realize what is happening they do respond to the grief of those around them. With any loss, especially that of a parent, the baby responds to the change in schedule, tension in those loving her and the disruption in routine.

Their responses:

- † More crying
- † Thumb or finger sucking
- † Sense anxiety, sorrow

What you can do:

- † Keep to the baby's schedule as much as possible.
- † Keep baby in her own home and with as few people as possible there caring for the infant
- † Do some extra cuddling
- † Talk to the infant as you hold him. While he may not understand, it may help you.

TODDLER-AGES TWO TO FIVE

Here is the delightful age of first language, first adventures and very little idea of permanence. Two to Five asks, "When is daddy coming back?" They tend to become babies again, returning to time when things felt safer. Bedwetting, clinging, whining and even having more illness are common. At this

age, children are not linear but random access. They will grieve, then play, grieve, then play. They're just beginning to develop understanding and need to know they are an important part of the family, will always be cared for and can be trusted. Children this age often believe that if they have "bad" thoughts then bad things can happen. For example, "if I had just been good, Mommy wouldn't have died."

Their responses:

- † May cling; doesn't want parent to leave
- † May sleep more; may wake frequently
- † May be more "hyper"
- † Reverts to baby talk
- † May want bottle and diapers

What you can do:

- † Be honest. Tell the child why the person died.
- † Use words such as dead and died. Avoid passed away, gone to heaven, is asleep
- † Answer questions-knowing the question may not come right away.
- † Explain what death is
- † Explain the feeling they may have. Let them know that: It's okay to cry and be sad. Even big people will cry. It's okay to play, too.
- † Be sure the child knows that he did NOT cause the death.
- † Involve the child as much as possible in funeral planning.
- † Let her know someone will be there for her during the funeral or memorial service and in the days ahead to give comfort and support.

SIX TO NINE

They may know death is final but they may not want to admit it. Six to Nine has watched cartoons. They've seen violence on TV and sometimes in their own lives. They know what it's like to be afraid. They may still overestimate their own power to cause the death and may think death is contagious. They don't know what to say or what to do. IN some ways, then someone we love dies, we adults become a lot like this age group.

Their responses:

- † Bedwetting is common
- † Shyness may increase
- † Plays "death" and "funeral"
- † Acting out may increase
- † Grades may suffer
- † School may become safe haven

What you can do:

- † Ask what the child understands already.
- † Work from his questions.
- † Be honest. Use words such as dead and died.
- † Explain what death is.
- † Answer questions.
- † Explain what feeling may come and that other six to nines have similar feelings.
- † Be sure he knows nothing that he thought or did caused it.
- † Talk about any fears she has.
- † Involve the child as much as possible in memorial/funeral planning, letting her know what will happen and when.

TEN TO TWELVE

These are the "in between" years for our children. This is a fragile age, between child and adolescence. Friends are terribly important and they often believe that grieving will make them seem *different*. They want to be independent but know that they can't yet make it on their own. They may fear abandonment, death of others and their own deaths. They worry about relationships: *Who will care for Grandma now? Who will provide the money we need?* They may seem withdrawn and distant then very close and vulnerable.

Their responses:

- † Anger is normal
- † Feelings of "unfairness" against"
- † May withdraw
- † Acting out occurs
- † Philosophical talk with friends

What you can do:

- † Be honest. Give as many details of the death as the child needs and wants. They are usually curious and interested. While younger children may be satisfied to know that "Grandpa's heart stopped working," this age group wants to know what happened to the heart, how Grandpa was cared for and what will have to Grandma.
- † Answer questions.
- † Explain what feelings may come.
- † Provide a journal for writing down feelings, thoughts and letters to the person who died.
- † Offer your love, understanding and support
- † Involve as much as possible in planning the service.

TEENS

Teenage years themselves are a grief experience. It's the loss of a childhood-no more cuddling into laps, getting read to and played with. It's not yet the reaching of adulthood when you can make your own decisions and live your own life. It can be a very difficult time for everyone. Teens may feel guilty because at this time of crisis they're starting to pull away from the family. They may feel scared and actually challenge death, something that is even more frightening to parents who have already buried one child. Boys may become very macho and refuse to cry or admit they have feelings while girls may count heavily on their friends to listen to them and be supportive.

Their responses:

- † Search for spirituality
- † Risky behavior not uncommon
- † Seek out others outside the immediate family

What you can do:

- † Be honest.
- † Tell about the death and give details.
- † Explain what feelings may come
- † Encourage him to talk to a teacher, coach or favorite relative if he can't open up and talk to you.
- † Say what you feel.
- † Say what you need.

- † If you need your teen to be especially careful now, explain that you're afraid, too, and it will take awhile to get back to normal.
- † Touch, pat and hug.
- † Give your love and understanding
- † Say it's okay to cry and it's okay for you to cry, too.
- † Tell her how much you appreciate her.
- † Respect your teen's need for private time.

VISITATIONS, MEMORIAL SERVICES, FUNERALS, BURIALS AND CREMATION

Typically when someone dies, the pastor works with the family in planning some type of celebration of the person's life. It is the practice here at Crossroads to do such planning with the individual prior to their death. This way the service is a personal reflection of the individual and the preplanning services as a gift to the family during a period of loss and grief.

While the format for such services are a personal preference, there are some practices which occur here quite frequently.

Visitations are the times prior to the actual service when family and friends gather to express their feelings, share stories and memories and come together as a community. Typically the anticipated number of guests determines the length of the visitation. Most common are one to two hours.

Memorial services and funerals are similar in format. The main difference is that at a funeral the deceased's body is present in a casket and the funeral home staff is present to assist.

At a memorial service, there is no body or casket. Both services are ones of worship which includes prayers, music, scripture and a message of comfort. Often members of the family or friends offer their thoughts and remembrances of the deceased which difficult but also an appropriate method to begin the healing process.

Cremation is a very common practice today in American culture. You may want to explain to your child that the body is placed into a small, special room where there is a special fire. It is not like any fire you have in a fireplace.

The special fire turns the body into a soft ash which will go into a beautiful container called an urn which the family selects.

Burial of either the body or the ashes can be either a public or private event following the service. Again, the family makes choices that are appropriate for their members.

What Your Child Can Do

There are ways to make the funeral special to the child. In addition to their own visitation they can:

- † Draw pictures to put into the casket
- † Write poems and letters to their person which can also be placed in the casket if so desired.
- † Choose to put something personal into the casket.
- † Help select the casket and clothes the person wears, especially if the person is very close to them.
- † Help choose the music.
- † Write something to be read at the service.
- † Have the child give each person at the service a piece of paper and ask them to write a memory or story of the dead person. After the service the child can design a cover and make a memory book for the family.

Fernside
2303 Indian Mound Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45212
513-841-1012
www.fernside.org

Founded in 1986, Fernside is a non-profit, non-denominational organization serving grieving children and their families.

The Front Porch of Atlanta
POB 2908
Decatur, GA 30031-2908
www.thefrontporch.org

Non-profit organization that provides safe and supportive environment that promotes healing for children who have experienced the death of a loved one.

Hospice Foundation of America
2001 S Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20009
800-854-3402
www.hospicefoundation.org

Hospice Foundation of America is a not-for-profit organization that provides leadership in the development and application of hospice and its philosophy of care. It publishes the *Living with Grief* series.

National Funeral Directors Association
13625 Bishop's Drive
Brookfield, WI 53005
800-228-6332
www.nfda.org

Dedicating to enhancing the funeral service profession and to providing quality service to the consumer.

New England Center for Loss & Transition
POB 292
Guilford, CT 06437
203-458-1734
www.neclt.org

Non-profit organization dedicated to training professionals in topics of grief, loss and transition. Sponsors seminars and in-service training for those working in the field of bereavement or affected by grief and loss. Also provides lists of organizations nationwide that offer programs for grieving children.

Crossroads Presbyterian Church

New Hope Children's Wish Foundation and Grieving Children's Services
900 North Maitland Ave
Maitland, FL 32751
404-599-0909
www.newhopeorlando.org

Center for Grieving Children (an affiliate organization) provides a safe and supportive environment where children grieving the death of a loved one can share their experience.

The Legacy: A Grief Center for Children
POB 636
Oklahoma City, OK 73101
405-475-9229
www.legacyatokc.org

The Legacy is to provide a safe, loving, and positive environment for grieving children and their families, in the Oklahoma City Metro Area, who have lost a loved one to any cause.

Waterfront Books Network
85 Crescent Road
Burlington, VT 05401
800-639-6063
www.waterfrontbooks.com

Waterfront Books Network is a publishing and distributing company as well as an information center, serving professionals and parents who are concerned with children at home, at school and in the community.

BIBLIOGRAPHY-CHILDREN AND GRIEF

ADULT MATERIALS

Brenner, Avis, *Helping Children Cope With Stress*. Lexington, MA: Heath & Co, 1985

While this books deals with a variety of stresses that affect the lives of our children, chapter 5 focuses solely on the permanent separation issues of death and adoption.

Cassini, Kathleen K. and Rogers, Jacqueline L., *Death and the Classroom: A Teacher's Guide to Assist Grieving Students*. Cincinnati, OH: Griefwork of Cincinnati, Inc., 1989

Teachers and educational professionals are the target audience for this book. It includes down-to-earth "how to's" with suggestions that are powerful and easy to follow.

Coleman, Lyman and Scales, Marty, editors, *Dealing with Grief and Loss*. Littleton, CO: Serendipity House. 1990

As a support group resource, this publication offers a course for anyone who is facing a situation of loss. It discusses a Biblical perspective on the feelings experienced during times of grief and loss. While it is oriented around a Christian perspective, no religious background is assumed or necessary.

Crenshaw, David A., *Bereavement: Counseling the Grieving throughout the Life Cycle*. New York: Continuum, 1990

Grief is examined from a life cycle perspective, infancy to old age. Special losses at each stage of life, such as death of a parent, child, spouse, and sibling, and the practical guidelines and strategies for counselors and frontline caregivers are highlighted.

Grollman, Earl L., *Talking About Death: A Dialogue Between Parent and Child*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1990

Beginning with a Children's Read-Along, the author provides a supporting parents' guide to explaining death. Also included is how to explain the concept of death, a child's emotions, explanation of what happens to the person who died and insights into how children react to specific kinds of death.

Huntley, Theresa, *Helping Children Grieve: When Someone They Love Dies*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1991

Huntley offers insights that will help you listen to children, answer their questions and guide them in coping with their feelings. Also included are helps for dealing with the behavior changes that often accompany a child's grief.

James, John W. and Friedman, Russell, *When Children Grieve*. HarperCollins, 2001

Author offers a cutting-edge volume to free children from the false idea of "not feeling bad" and to empower them with positive, effective methods of dealing with loss.

Jewett, Claudia L., *Helping Children Cope with Separation and Loss*. Harvard, MA: The Harvard Common Press, 1982

This somewhat dated book deals with separation and loss in general terms including telling a child about a loss, early reactions and emotions and letting go and moving on.

Johnson, Joy and Dr. Marvin, *Children Grieve, Too: Helping Children Cope With Grief*. Omaha, NE: The Centering Corporation, 1998

The Centering founders offer information to those who work with grieving children. Basic, reader friendly, and talks about what you really need to know and how children respond to grief from infancy to teen.

Lester, Andrew D., Editor, *When Children Suffer: A Sourcebook for Ministry With Children in Crisis*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1987

The nature of crises that affect children is discussed and also ways that ministers can respond. Authors experienced in the field of childcare wrote about how to minister to children in bereavement as well as other crisis situations.

Linn, Erin, *150 Facts About Grieving Children*. Incline Village, Nevada: The Publisher's Mark, 1990

Based on her assumption that children do grieve, Linn offers a listing of short, concise facts about children and grieving.

Miller, James E., *What will Help me?/How can I help?* Ft. Wayne, IN: Willowgreen Press, 2000

A double book (you can begin from the front or the back) describing 12 things to remember and 12 things to do when you have suffered a loss.

Morris, Virginia, *Talking About Death*. Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2004

Personal stories woven with practical matters by teaching us how to achieve a greater sense of peace in dying by rediscovering the art of living.

Webb, Nancy Boyd, editor, *Helping Bereaved Children: A Handbook for Practitioners*. New York: The Guilford Press, 1993

Edited by a professional social worker, this publication is divided into three sections: the theoretical framework for understanding a child's view death, deaths occurring in families, and death situations when these have occurred in the community.

Wolfelt, Alan D., *A Child's View of Grief*. Fort Collins, CO: Companion Press, 1991

Alan Wolfelt explains how children and adolescent grieve after someone loved dies.

Worden, J. William, *Children and Grief: When a Parent Dies*. New York: The Guilford Press, 1996

William Worden presents the major findings from the Child Bereavement Study and looks at the implications of these findings for intervention with bereaved children and their families.

BIBLIOGRAPHY-CHILDREN AND GRIEF

CHILDREN'S MATERIALS

Brown, Marc Tolon, *When Dinosaurs Die*. New York: Little Brown & Co., 1998

Using dinosaur characters, this book describes the meaning of different terms associated with death including what does alive mean and what does *dead* mean. At the same time, the book tells a story to illustrate the various terms.

Breebaart, Joeli and Piet, *When I Die, Will I Get Better?* New York: Peter Bedrick Books, 1993

Using rabbits as characters, a father and his older son tell the story of the of the younger son's death and its impact on the family.

*Bruchac, Joseph, *Fox Song*. New York: Putnam and Grosset Group, 1997

After the death of her Indian great-grandmother, Jamie remembers the many special things the old woman shared with her about the natural world.

Carson, Jo, *You hold me and I'll hold you*. New York: Orchard Books, 1992

When a great-aunt dies, a young child finds comfort in being held and in holding, too.

Clifton, Lucille, *Everett Anderson's Goodbye*. New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1983

This is a short children's storybook that presents the five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

Constans, Gabriel, *Just a Heartbeat Away: When A Mother Dies of AIDS*. Omaha, NE The Centering Corporation, 1996

This book moves through the feelings during the illness, death and many changes that happen when a parent dies of AIDS. The family will touch your heart and the message will last forever.

Dickerson, Julie, *Grandpa's Berries*. Cherubic Press, 1995

This story provides children with a healthy understanding of the life cycle. After Grandpa dies, Alice discovers her memories are as sweet as grandpa's berries.

Goble, Paul, *Beyond the Ridge*. New York: Aladdin, 1993

At her death an elderly Plains Indian woman experiences the afterlife believed in by her people, while the surviving family members prepare her body according to their custom.

Green, Alesia Alexander, *Sunflowers and Rainbows for Tia*.

Tia is confused when she is told her Daddy died. She wonders what will happen to her family. She learns that family is always there to talk to and take care of you. Includes planting instructions in memory of your loved one.

Crossroads Presbyterian Church

Helene, Robin, *The Snowman*. Omaha, NE: The Centering Corporation, February 2000

While Tom and Buddy build a snowman they talk about memories of their father. They use Dad's scarf and hat to decorate a snowman. In the end they both learn that all feelings are ok.

Hemery, Kathleen, *The Brightest Star*. Omaha, NE: The Centering Corporation, 1998

Molly was scared when her mom was in the hospital and angry when her mother died. She's didn't know what to draw when the teacher asked the class to draw a picture of their families. Molly discovers that love never dies and special memories stay with you forever.

Hemery, Kathleen, *Not Just a Fish*. Omaha, NE: The Centering Corporation, 2000

Puffer the fish is a very loved pet. One day Puffer became sick and didn't swim anymore. After Puffer dies, the family finds a creative way to say goodbye to a young child's pet goldfish.

Holmes, Margaret M., *Sam's Dad Died*. Omaha, NE: The Centering Corporation, 1999

This is a child's book of hope through grief that offers some practical suggestions for all caregivers.

Jamerino, Mary Herta, *Treasured memories of a Special Person*. Fraser, MI: Treasured Publications, 1996

Any age child can use this workbook for the death of any loved one. It is full color throughout and includes pages for funniest memory, happiest memory, wishes, hopes, favorite foods shared and more. Includes a page for adults helping children grieve.

Johnson, Joy, *Remember Rafferty*. Omaha, NE: The Centering Corp, 1991

A book about the death of a pet for children of all ages.

Johnson, Joy and Patrick Loring, *Lucy Lettuce*. Omaha, NE: The Centering Corp, 1994

A story for children, using vegetables to demonstrate, death and grieving.

Kroll, Virginia L., *Fireflies, peach pies & lullabies*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1995

When Francie's Great-Granny Annabel dies of Alzheimer's disease, Francie finds a way to help people remember the real person rather than the shell she had become as the disease ran its course.

Mundy, Michaelene, *Sad Isn't Bad*. St. Meinrad, IN: Abbey Press, 1998

Presented in the language of children, this publication is a good grief guidebook for kids dealing with loss. It offers children of all ages (and the people who love and care for them) a comforting, realistic look at loss—loaded with positive, life-affirming helps for coping with loss as a child. It promotes honest and healthy grief—and growth.

Powell, Sandy, *Geranium Morning*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books, 1990

Timothy's dad is killed unexpectedly in an auto accident. Frannie's mom is dying. Together, they show us what it means to be afraid, to listen, and to be a real friend.

Quinlan, Patricia, *Tiger Flowers*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1994

When his uncle Michael dies of AIDS, Joel's dreams and thoughts of Michael keep his memory alive.

Ross, Kent, *Cemetery Quilt*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995

When her Pawpaw dies, Josey doesn't want to go to his funeral until her Granny shares with her the family's cemetery quilt.

Romain, Trevor, *What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?* Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing, 1999

An easy to understand list of questions and answers for our children's concerns

Shriver, Maria, *What's Heaven*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999

A tender, thoughtful treatment of a very emotional and difficult subject.

Silverman, Janis, *Help Me Say Goodbye*. Minneapolis, MN: Fairview Press, 1999

This is an art therapy activities book that encourages children to express their feelings in words or pictures, helps them think about what to say and do, how to deal with their feelings and how to remember their special friend or relative.

Taha, Karen T., *A gift for Tia Rosa*. New York: Bantam Books, 1991

Little Carmela is close to her elderly neighbor and saddened by her illness and death, but she finds a way to express her love when Tia Rosa's grandchild is born.

Temes, Roberta, *The Empty Place*. New Horizon Place, 1992

When a sibling dies, there is an empty place—in the house, at the table and in her brother's heart. Explores different feelings and positive ways to deal with grief. Ages 5-10

Van den Berg, Marinus, *The Three Birds: A story for children about the loss of a loved one*. Milwaukee, WI: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 1994

When a young bird's mother dies, its father tells it that Mummy is living in the sun now, where it is warm and Mummy can fly freely.

Vogel, Robin Helene, *The Snowman*. Omaha, NE: The Centering Corporation, 1994

The snowman was the first Tommy and Buddy had built since Dad died. The brothers talk about how Dad died and what his death meant to them.

Wild, Margaret, *Toby*. New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1994

When Toby the dog gets old and sick and finally dies, the children who love him express their love in different ways.

Wolfelt, Alan D., *How I Feel: A Coloring Book for Grieving Children*. Batesville, IN: Batesville Management Services, 1996

Coloring book designed for children ages 3-8 to help children mourn the loss of someone they love.

Wood, Douglas, *Granddad's Prayer of the Earth*, Candlewick Press, 1999

Granddad explains the difference ways all living things—trees, rocks, streams and human beings—can pray. Ages 4-8

Yolen, Jane, *Granddad Bill's song*. New York: Philomel Books, 1994

A boy asks others how they felt when his grandfather died and then shares his own feelings.

RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS-CHILDREN AND GRIEF

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
3615 Wisconsin Ave NW
Washington, DC 20016-3007
202-966-7300
www.aacap.org

Assists parents and families in understanding developmental, behavioral, emotional and mental disorders affecting children and adolescents.

American Association of Pastoral Counseling
9504-A Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031-2303
703-385-6967
www.aapc.org

Founded in 1963, organization provides in-depth religious and theological training to professionals who respond to the needs of both children and adults.

Amanda the Panda
1000 73rd St, Suite 12
Des Moines, IA 50311
515-223-4847
www.AmandaThePanda.org

Provides extensive support to children who are grieving the death of a family member through accident, illness, suicide, or homicide.

The American Hospice Foundation
2120 L Street NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20037
202-223-0204
www.americanhospice.org

Not-for-profit organization advancing the hospice concept of care through public education and consumer research.

The Association for Death Education and Counseling
342 North Main St
West Hartford, CT 06117-2507
806-586-7503
www.adec.org

Multi-disciplinary professional organization dedicated to promoting death education, bereavement, counseling and care of the dying.

Barr Harris Children's Grief Center
The Institute of Psychoanalysis
180 North Michigan Ave
Chicago, IL 60601
312-922-7474 Ext 308
www.barrharris.org

Helps children face the pain of death, divorce, separation and abandonment; also the Institute focuses on the study of separation and loss in children, especially as it affects youngsters under ten years of age.

The Centering Corporation
1531 North Saddle Creek Road
Omaha, NE 68104
402-553-1200
www.centering.org

A non-profit bereavement resource center; family owned and operated business that is dedicated to serving the needs of those healing from loss.

The Center for Grieving Children
49 York Street
Portland, ME 04101
207-775-5216
www.cgcmaine.org

A non-profit organization committed to offering a safe environment for children and teens to express and heal their grief.

The Compassionate Friends
POB 3696
Oak Brooke, IL 60522
630-990-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

National non-profit, non-denominational, self-help support organization that offers friendship and understanding to families who are grieving the death of a child of any age, of any cause.

The Dougy Center
POB 86582
Portland, OR 97286
503-775-5683
www.dougy.org

In the Portland, OR area, the Dougy Center provides support for grieving children that are age specific and loss specific. Additional services include national training seminars, consultations to schools and organizations, crisis-line information and referrals.