



# Navigating Grief & Loss with Children

S P E A K L I F E . C O M M U N I T Y , L L C

Psalm 34:18: "The Lord is close to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

## 5 STAGES OF GRIEF

### Denial | "State of Shock"

The world becomes meaningless, overwhelming and makes no sense.

### Anger | Intensity Matches the Depth of the Relationship

This uncomfortable, but necessary step may extend to family members, friends or schoolmates. Anger may appear as irritability or disrespect. It is very similar to an open wound.

### Bargaining | "What if " Questions

The child may go back in time and question their behavior in an attempt to change the outcome.

### Depression | Life Has Changed

This is not a sign of mental illness, just a progression of loss. Confusion sets in because to be "ok" often means the child is in agreement with what has happened. \*Its important to acknowledge that the incident was not "ok", a traumatic event happened-acknowledging the trauma will validate their confusion.

### Acceptance | New Normal

Realization that our loved one will not be with us.

*The stages of grief are not like stops on a school bus, not all children progress through the stages in a linear timeline.*

## Empowering Parents

- A child's grieving process will be influenced by their chronological age, previous experience with death, and their relationship to the person who has died.
- Everyone grieves differently, what works for one child may not work for another, yet having the love and comfort from family and friends is the best way to support a child who is grieving.
- Don't be afraid to use the name of the person who has died, or share stories on how their life impacted others.
- Be available. Try not to avoid the subject. Check in and ask the child how they are doing. Let them know you are available to listen.
- Everyday life may seem overwhelming, encourage children to focus on one day at a time.
- John 16:33: "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

### FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Bonnie Jo Daniels, M.S.,  
Registered Mental Health Counselor Intern  
352-658-7561

SpeakLife.community@gmail.com

