

# Children Grieve Too

Children have a shorter attention span and do not handle grief in the same way as adults. They may go “back and forth” with outward expressions of their grief. Providing children with the opportunity to talk about their loss and to ask the questions on their mind; and, responding to them with empathy and calm reassurance may be all they need. No two children grieve the same way. Changes in their behaviors which are of concern can be a reminder that they may need some extra time and understanding, and perhaps the assistance of a bereavement professional, to help them learn alternative ways to cope with and express their feelings about the loss they have experienced.

## How adults can best help grieving children:

Immediately following the death of a loved one, encourage children to participate, but do not force them to take part in the funeral planning and rituals. If they desire, allow them to see the body prior to the funeral/memorial service. Help them find a way to say “goodbye.”

Also:

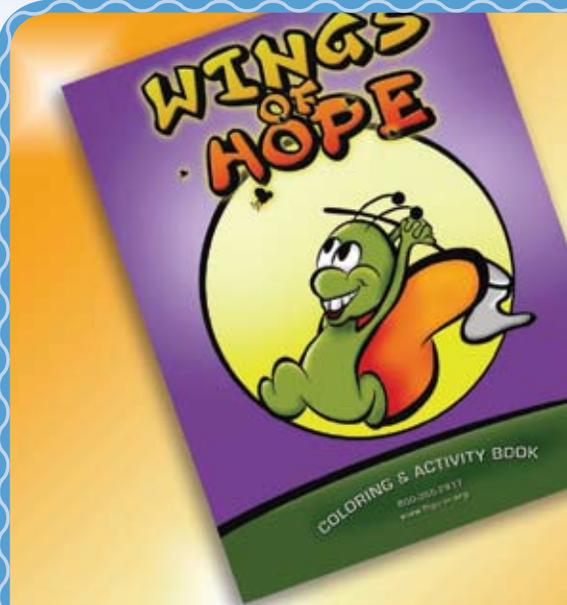
- Answer questions in an honest way
- Acknowledge when you do not have an answer
- Help them feel safe and secure
- Maintain their normal routine as much as possible
- Maintain appropriate boundaries
- Set clear behavioral expectations
- Give them tools to express their feelings
- Let them play—it’s their work!

## How will you know if your family needs help?

Any of the following changes in your child may indicate more support is needed:

- A significant change in grades
- Acting out behaviors
- Uncharacteristic aggressiveness
- Angry outbursts
- Wanting to be alone more than normal
- Nightmares
- Risk-taking behavior

We are here to talk with you about any questions or concerns. Call 1-800-355-2817 for a free consultation with one of our bereavement professionals. We are here so no one is alone with the burden of their loss. ✕



## FREE Coloring & Activity Book

Family Life Care has created a coloring/ activity book for children ages 3-12 to help them identify their feelings and learn how loving memories can help with their sorrow. Download this FREE coloring/ activity book at [www.familylifecarein.org](http://www.familylifecarein.org) under Wings of Hope for your children’s enjoyment, or to help you talk with your children about their grief.

