

Helping a Child with Grief & Loss

"when we don't tell children what is happening around them, they are going to imagine what's going on"
-Andrea Warnick

The Child's Safe Person Shares the News

Ideally, the child's safe person shares the news (we know this isn't always possible). If the adult is also grieving, it is important the child hear the news from the person who is close to them so they can share their feelings openly.



Don't Wait

The sooner the child knows about the news, the sooner they can begin the healing process



Be Honest

Avoid using euphemisms like "passed on" or "lost." Children are very literal, and need adults to be as clear as possible. Vague language makes children confused and anxious.



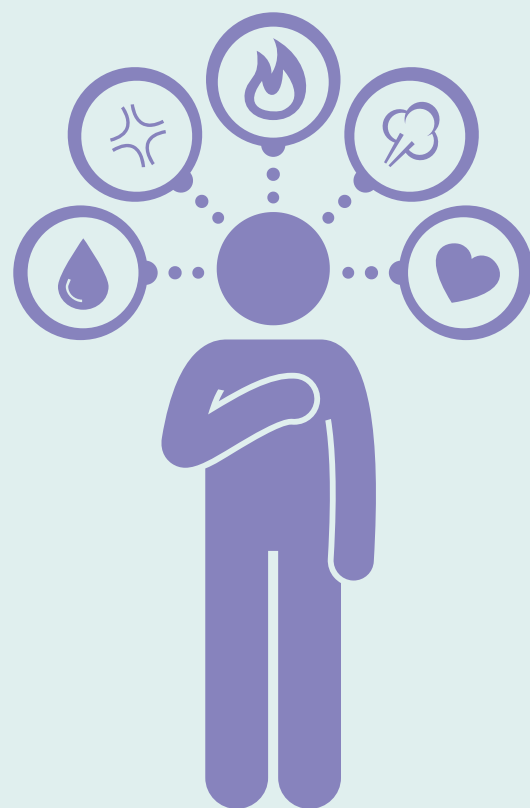
Maintain Normal Routines

The grief process takes time, but children often require the predictability of regular routines in order to feel secure.



Create Space to Express Emotions

It's normal and appropriate for the adults in the child's life to also feel emotionally impacted by the loss. Model the healthy expression of emotions to your children (don't hide them), and let the child know that feelings of sadness, anger, and fear are normal.



Honour the Loss

Remembering is part of grieving and part of healing. Share memories; look at photos; or create something like a poem, collage, painting, or scrap book to dedicate to the lost loved one.

