

Especially for Teens

Handout for Saferoom

(This list developed by teens in Bereavement Support Program, Caledonia Health Care)

Things that helped me with my grief

- Being acknowledged (Knowing people were thinking of me)
- Working (It was often a relief to stay busy)
- Helping (Helping others made me feel better)
- Sharing (When friends told me of similar losses, I felt less alone)
- Talking (I was grateful for friends who were willing to listen)
- Crying (It helped loosen up the knots inside me and brought relief)
- Laughing (I learned it was OK to laugh and have a good time, too)
- Hugging (It often meant more than words could say)
- Being with my friends (I like sometimes doing the old, “normal” stuff and getting away from home)
- Being alone (Sometimes that’s what I wanted most – there aren’t any rules for grief)

Things that hurt

- Being avoided (People didn’t know what to say or do)
- Being pushed to talk (Sometimes I didn’t feel like talking or didn’t like people being nosy)
- Feeling different (People whispered about me, looked at me. Sometimes I just wanted to forget what had happened and feel normal again)
- Being offered a replacement (Like people saying I should get another dog or that my mother should have another baby)
- Not being asked (It hurt when people asked my friends what happened because they were afraid to ask me)
- Being told how to feel (“You shouldn’t cry”, “don’t be angry”, “you should be over this by now”, “everyone feels that way”)

Ways you can express sympathy

- Say “I’m sorry this happened to you.” (It is direct and simple)
- Give a hug, take some flowers, bake some cookies, lend a teddy bear
- Listen
- Don’t be afraid to mention the dead person’s name
- Remember to keep in touch
- Find out if s/he wants to do “routine” activities or wants a break
- Don’t act embarrassed if a grieving friend cries OR laughs...just BE there!

Things that might be a support to grieving teenagers:

- Joining a support group of peers who are also grieving.
- Writing letters of “regret and appreciation” to the one who has died.