

HELPING KIDS THROUGH ANTICIPATORY GRIEF

- * Your example of healthy self-care.
- * Taking good care of their bodies (with your help) by eating well, drinking lots of water, and fun exercise.
- * Playing and speaking the language of play to address their hurts and fears, with professional help if needed.

KIDS CAN
HEAL BY...

KIDS FEEL
SAFE WHEN...

- * We exercise patience when they express a spectrum of emotions. We want to communicate that they are not alone in their grief.
- * We offer them appropriate choices that give them a sense of personal power.
- * We maintain appropriate limits and rules and enforce them without becoming too overprotective.

- * Reverting to an earlier stage of development.
- * Becoming a little adult.
- * Having trouble sleeping and needing more support at bedtime.
- * Expressing their fears through their play.

KIDS
SOMETIMES
REACT BY...

Kids
and
Anticipatory
Grief

KIDS FEEL
HEARD
WHEN...

- * We really listen without giving advice or telling them what they need to do to feel better.
- * We say back to them, with their own words, what we have heard without simply interjecting our own thoughts.
- * We ask clarifying questions rather than assume we know what they are experiencing.
- * We lead with a feeling rather than a hard fact (e.g., "You are really concerned about your mom...").

KIDS
NEED MORE
HELP WHEN...

KIDS FEEL
UNDERSTOOD
WHEN...

- * They experience significant personality changes that last over the course of several weeks.
- * They over-focus on death and dying for an extended period of time.
- * They do not know how to express the feelings in ways that help them, so the feelings surface inappropriately or in an unexpected way (e.g., daily stomach aches, headaches, fits of rage, consistent uncontrollable crying, irrational fear, etc.).

- * We are willing to talk about what is hard and what they are feeling about it.
- * We don't limit their experiences to the "5 Stages of Grief."
- * We understand how grief is expressed at different developmental stages.