

Supporting Your Child through Grief and Loss: Talking Tips



Grief is our emotional response to loss. COVID-19 is creating a lot of loss right now in our children's lives—from the loss of loved ones to the loss of extra-curricular activities or routine. Kids of all ages can experience grief, and caregivers can play a big role in helping them cope.

Be aware of news, social media, and websites (including many homepages) that your kids may be hearing and seeing. If they do see something that might create a sense of fear or loss, be proactive in asking them “how did that make you feel?”

When you see your child acting up or shutting down because of their grief, help them understand what’s happening. Try to find a way to give them a sense of control over their environment.

Try to create a daily routine for your children. This helps to create structure and helps children feel a sense of control by knowing what to expect. Find times in this daily routine that you can make it a habit to check in with your child. You can just say “how are you feeling today?” or “Is there anything going on that you want to talk about?” Making this a daily habit helps our children know we will be there when they need us.

Talk to them about how to check in with their friends who might be experiencing grief. Let them know that friends support each other, even when things are hard.

Work on coping strategies together. Model how you use your own coping strategies and when you use them.

Create new opportunities for family traditions, considering new ways to celebrate special occasions and talk with your child about how even when we experience loss, we always have an opportunity to find new opportunities for joy.

Help your child develop the words they need to communicate about grief and loss. When you experience or notice loss in your life, in a story, or on TV, use it as an opportunity to start a conversation. Make sure your children know what words like “loss” and “grief” mean so they can use them when they need to.

To learn more about how well-being is within REACH, visit motraumaschools.com.

To talk with a counselor, call or text the Missouri Disaster Distress Helpline:
800/985-5990 Text: “TalkWithUs” to 66746