

# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

## GRIEF AND LOSS



**Grief** is an emotional response we have when we lose someone or something we care about. It's not just about feeling sad, it can also mean feeling angry, guilty, or even relieved at times, and it shows up differently for everyone. When it comes to kids and teens dealing with loss, they're on this rollercoaster of emotions, but they might not have the words to express it like adults do. They might ask lots of questions, seem unusually quiet, or not want to do things they usually enjoy.

**As parents**, it's about being there for them, offering a shoulder to lean on, and guiding them through these feelings with lots of love and patience. Letting them know it's okay to feel all these things and that they're not alone in this journey is key.

### TIPS

- Encourage open discussions about their feelings. Validate their emotions as normal and understandable.
- Keeping a regular schedule can provide a sense of normalcy and security.
- Create a memory box to keep memories of their loved one close and enhance the expression of feelings.
- Use books and stories to read about characters in similar situations can help children understand and process their emotions.
- Seek professional help If grief seems to be overwhelming or persistent..
- Engage in activities your child enjoys. This can provide comfort and strengthen your bond during a difficult period.
- Remember, everyone's grief journey is unique. Give your child the time they need to heal.

### RESOURCES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Please visit [essexpediatrics.com/resources/](https://essexpediatrics.com/resources/) for links and additional resources.

- **Children's Grief Group Via UVM Medical Center:** for children aged 5-16. Please contact Chelsie Lang at [\(802\) 847-4069](tel:802-847-4069) or [Chelsie.Lang@uvmhealth.org](mailto:Chelsie.Lang@uvmhealth.org) for more details.
- **General Grief Support via UVM Health Network Home Health & Hospice:** online support group. Contact Paul Weil at [\(802\) 860-4497](tel:802-860-4497) ext.3256 or [Paul.Weil@uvmhomehealth.org](mailto:Paul.Weil@uvmhomehealth.org).
- **General Grief Support at UVM Health Network Porter Medical Center:** online support group. Contact Louella Richer at [lricher@portermedical.org](mailto:lricher@portermedical.org) or [\(802\) 388-4744](tel:802-388-4744).

### RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- **When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death** by Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown: provides an accessible explanation of death for kids.
- **The Invisible String** by Patrice Karst for children.
- **Healing a Child's Heart After Loss** by Alan D. Wolfelt for guiding parents.

### RECOMMENDED ONLINE RESOURCES

- [childrengrieve.org](https://childrengrieve.org)
- [doug.org](https://doug.org)
- [childmind.org](https://childmind.org)