

BASIC IDEAS

It is important to understand these *first principles*.

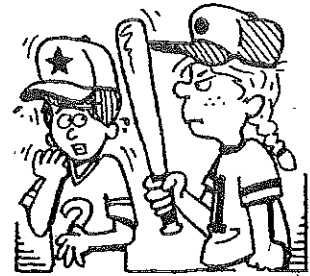
1. **Children and young people grieve.** Sometimes adults are so lost in their own grief that the grief of the young is unnoticed or unappreciated.
2. **Children and young people may grieve for a long time.** Younger children have short attention spans and a low tolerance for emotions so that they keep leaving and coming back to their grief. Young people of any age rarely get over a significant loss in a hurry and they should not be expected to.
3. **Each person's loss is special for that person.** Your child's will be different from yours. The *relationship* and *degree of attachment* usually determine the intensity of grief.
4. **A child should be prepared for loss, whenever possible.** What is expected and planned is always easier to handle.
5. **The loss should be dealt with immediately.** It is best if your child receives the news from the most supportive and caring person he or she knows--YOU.
6. **A child needs a role model, and you are the key role model.** As you talk about the loss and show emotions, your child is helped to do the same.
7. **A child needs a stable and secure environment.** Children need reassurance that they will be cared for and that the family unit will remain intact.
8. **Children often have three basic questions.** These come from a need for security. Answer them honestly and give reassurance of your care.
 - Did I cause this illness or death to happen?
 - Will this eventually happen to me?
 - Who will take care of me now?

STAGES OF GRIEF

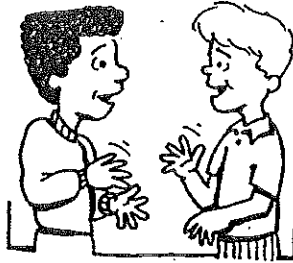
SHOCK/DENIAL (can't believe it)



ANGER/RAGE (at everything)



BARGAINING (God, self, others, anyone)



SAD/DEPRESSED (can't stop crying)



ACCEPT IT (quit trying to change it)