

Healthy Family Grief

No one grieves in the same way or in the same time frame, and nowhere is this more apparent than in a family dealing with the loss of a loved one. Although this can be a very difficult and painful journey, parents and children can help each other survive this loss and eventually heal.

Here are some healthy ways to get through this time:

- Keep communication open and consistent.
- Recognize that the loss has a different meaning for each family member because of the varying relationships with the loved one who has died. For example, if a mother dies, she had different relationships with her husband, her daughter and her son.
- Accept all forms of personal expression, and expect that they will be different for each person.
- Give each family member a voice in the shared rituals and traditions.
- Maintain routines and clear boundaries.
- Help each other adapt to new roles and responsibilities in the family.
- Be available and make time for each other.
 - › Eat meals together.
 - › Do family activities.
- Set and share new goals when the time is right for everyone. Some common goals are:
 - › Learn to live without a loved one.
 - › Learn to enjoy life again.
- Decide as a family on daily and long-term ways to honor a loved one's memory.
 - › Talk about the loved one.
 - › Share memories.
 - › Display pictures.
 - › Maintain traditions.
 - › Play favorite music.
 - › Donate to a charity.
- Commit regular acts of kindness and thoughtfulness.
- Continue to read, discuss and learn about grief.