

# HOW CLINICIANS CAN HELP CHILDREN WITH GRIEF AT EVERY AGE...



The Jewish Board  
Health and Human Services for All New Yorkers

## Littles: Ages 5-8



### COMMON GRIEF REACTIONS

- Young children grieve in short spurts or “pediatric doses”
- Transitioning into understanding the finality of death (5-7 yrs)
- It is ok for child to look to parents/caregivers’ reactions to grief
- May have somatic complaints (more visits to the nurse), regression or trouble sleeping
- May wish to stay busy and/or do things that the deceased person wanted them to do in order to make them proud

### APPROPRIATE WAYS TO SPEAK WITH A GRIEVING CHILD

- Label/validate whatever emotions they are having
- Remember that behavior IS communication for you and the child
- Use clear and concise, age-appropriate language
- It’s okay if you don’t always have the answer
- HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY



### ACTIVITIES

- Draw—your feelings, a memory, or a wish
- Create a memory box/book/poster
- Read books together and answer questions
- Celebrate their loved one by eating a food that they liked, listening to music that they enjoyed or doing an activity they liked, together

### THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Children’s grief is informed by culture, religion and race
- Maintain a level of curiosity with the child’s experience in grief
- There are no “5 Stages”; grief is a non-linear process
- Grief and grieving changes over time



## Contact Us

Information and Referral  
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Loss & Bereavement  
Program Referral Form  
<https://forms.office.com/r/KairvStjbJ>

