Grief In Young Children

Children can experience many types of loss. Death of a loved one, being placed in foster care or adoption, losing contact with a parent due to divorce, or losing an adult relationship such as a teacher are losses that can trigger grief in children. The range of reactions and emotions to loss vary greatly from child to child--from protest to crying. They may not understand the long term consequences of what has happened. So, it's important for adults to support children with processing their emotions and grieving.

How can you support a child who is grieving?

Give child sense of being take care of. Use physical closeness to provide a sense of being taken care of



Talk through what has happened. Give facts about the loss that can contribute to a more complete understanding of the situation



Encourage child to express their feelings and allow them to ask questions. Help child find personal meaning of loss



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Continue to reinforce a consistent routine at home and school



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Emphasize openness and honesty



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Caregivers should ask for help with their own grief whether that's seeking support from their social network or seeking professional help.





For more information, please contact Early Child Mental Health Consultation at Denver Health: ecmchc@dhha.org