

## Helping Your Grieving Child

- ❑ Allow your child to talk about the death as often as he/she wants.
- ❑ Let your child cry or be sad.
- ❑ Show love, support and care for your child physically and emotionally.
- ❑ Maintain a normal routine.
- ❑ Use simple, truthful words to explain death.
- ❑ Reassure the child that the death is not contagious; that the death of one person does not mean the child or other loved ones will soon die.
- ❑ Listen to what your child is saying; observe what your child is not saying.
- ❑ Children often think that they caused the death or illness. Reassure them that this is not true.
- ❑ Do not compare death with sleep, since this may make children afraid of sleeping.
- ❑ Encourage children to talk to each other about the death.
- ❑ Encourage children to remember their sibling by keeping a diary; box of mementos to remember him/her through stories, drawings, and play activities; use books, memorial or funeral services to explain death.
- ❑ Let your child know you are sad; it's okay for you to cry or be angry.
- ❑ Make sure your children understand that you are upset because your child died, and not because of anything they may have done.
- ❑ Obtain the help of professionals if a child's fears seem to last unusually long or seem unusually severe.

### Various ages and how they see death:

- ❑ Infancy to 2 years of age have no concept of death.
- ❑ Early childhood, 3 to 5 years of age, see death as temporary.
- ❑ School age, 5 to 10 years of age, knows that death is FOREVER.
- ❑ Later school age and adolescent, 11 to 18 years of age, have a more realistic view of death.



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