

Ways to Help Your Child Through this Difficult Time (Hand out for Parents)

Children do not need to be taught how to grieve. They will do it naturally and in healthy ways if we allow them and if we provide a safe atmosphere, permission and example to do so.

- Listen to them carefully. Let them know that their reactions are normal.
- Pay attention to them. Spend time with them and be nurturing and comforting.
- Reassure them that they are safe.
- Don't tell them that it could have been worse. People are not consoled by such statements. Instead, tell them that you are sorry such an event has occurred.
- Be aware that changes in behaviour or personality may occur.
- Don't take their anger or other feelings personally. Help them to find respectful ways to express their feelings e.g., by drawing, exercise, or talking.
- When going out, let them know where you are going and when you will be back.
- When you are out for a long time telephone and reassure them.
- Accept regressive behaviour such as bed-wetting, nail biting, thumb sucking, or the need for a night light.
- Share your own experience of being frightened of something.
- If they are feeling guilt or shame, reassure them that they did not choose for this to happen and that they are not to blame. Even if they were angry with the person who died, or had been mean to them, their actions did not make the event happen.
- Work with the school support services and other available services.
- As well as advising your child about appropriate use of social media, monitor their use particularly during this vulnerable time.

Support contacts for students:

- Kids Helpline: **1800 55 1800**
- Lifeline: **13 1114**

On-line support/counselling assistance for students:

- Kids Helpline Webchat Counselling: [Kids Helpline Webchat Counselling](#)
- Headspace On-line - Counselling: [Headspace Online Counselling](#)
- Youth Beyond Blue: [Youth Beyond Blue](#)

Support for parents and caregivers:

- Kids Helpline for Parents: **1300 30 1300**
- Guidance Officer
- GP
- Psychologist