

	Emotional and Spiritual Health Outcomes
<p>Individuals attending the program for less than nine months</p> <p><b>At Risk</b></p>	<p>Struggles with sleeping, eating, relationships, school/work, community, accepting or asking for help, communicating with family and others. Preoccupied with losses. Limited sense of humor/capacity to laugh. Limited ability to feel, give or receive love. Limited ability to positively relate to others or to have a positive outlook on life. Begin to feel a sense of community.</p>
<p>Individuals attending the program for nine months to one year</p> <p><b>Surviving</b></p>	<p>Ability to make essential life decisions. Ability to grieve loss. Ability to ask for help when needed or offered. Copes with tension and anxieties with some difficulty. Capacity to adapt to change and adversity. Finds some sense of humor/has capacity to laugh. Capacity to find creative and constructive outlets. Ability to channel feelings constructively. Ability to positively relate to others. Ability to accept limitations. Capacity to embrace strengths and abilities. Feels a sense of community.</p>
<p>Individuals attending the program for one year or more</p> <p><b>Thriving</b></p>	<p>Self-directing. Grieves loss. Asks for help when needed or offered. Copes with tension and anxieties and continues to function effectively. Adapts to change and adversity. Embraces strengths and abilities. Accepts limitations. Experiences growth. Finds creative and constructive outlets. Feels, gives, and receives love. Wants to give back to the community.</p> <p><b>GivEm 40 #1- 12, 14— 18, 20-40</b></p>



# Kids In Crisis

<b>Ages</b>	<b>Developmental Stage/Task</b>	<b>Concept of Death</b>	<b>Grief Response</b>	<b>Signs of Distress</b>	<b>Possible Interventions</b>
2-4	Egocentric. Believes world centers around them. Narcissistic. No cognitive understanding. Pre-conceptual – unable to grasp concepts.	Seen as abandonment. Seen as reversible – not permanent. Common statements, “Did you know my daddy died? – When will he be home?”	Intensive response but brief. Very present oriented. Most aware of altered patterns of care.	Regression: Eating and sleeping disorders – bedwetting.	Short interactions. Frequent repetition. Comforting. Touching.
4-7	Gaining sense of autonomy. Exploring world outside of self. Gaining language. Fantasy thinking/ wishing. Initiative phase seeing self as initiator. Concerns of guilt.	Death still seen as reversible. Great personification of death. Feeling of responsibility because of wishes, thoughts. Common statements, “It’s my fault; I was mad at her and wished she’d die.”	Verbalization. Great concern with process. How? Why? Repetitive questioning.	Regression: Nightmares, sleeping & eating disturbances. Violent play. Attempts to take on role of person who died.	Symbolic play. Drawing/stories. Allow/encourage expressions of energy/feelings anger. Talk about it.
7-11	Concrete – operational. Industry vs. inferiority. Beginning of socialization. Development of cognitive ability. Beginning of logical thinking.	Death as punishment. Fear of bodily harm; mutilation. This is a difficult transition period – still want to see death as reversible but beginning to see it as final.	Specific questioning. Desire for complete detail. Concerned with how others are responding. What is the right way? How should they be responding? Starting to have ability to mourn and understand mourning.	Regression: problems in school, withdrawal from friends. Acting out. Sleeping & eating disturbances. Overwhelming concern with body. Suicidal thoughts (desire to join one who died). Role confusion.	Answer questions. Encourage expression of range of feelings. Encourage/allow control. Be available but allow time alone. Symbolic play. TALK ABOUT IT!
11-18	Formal Operational Problem solving. Abstract thinking. Integration of one’s own personality.	“ADULT” approach. Ability to abstract, beginning to truly conceptualize death. Work at making sense of teachings.	Depression. Denial. Repression. More often willing to talk to people outside of family. Traditional mourning.	Depression. Anger. Anger toward parents. Non-compliance. Rejection of former teaching. Role confusion. Acting out.	Encourage verbalizations. Do not take control. Encourage self-motivation. Listen. Be there. Do not attempt to take grief away.

Michael's Place provides support and advocacy for those grieving the death of a loved one and educates the community on grief issues.

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# Finding the Right Words

## Less Helpful

## More Helpful

### "Be Strong"

"God doesn't give you any more than you can handle."	"It sounds like this is really hard"
"What doesn't kill you makes you stronger"	"How are you doing with all this?"
"You need to be strong like your mother."	"I'm so glad you showed up here today."
"You need to be strong for your mother (or for your children, family, coworkers, etc.)"	"I'm here, if you want to talk now."
"Be strong, and you'll get through it."	"I can only imagine how you've coped."

### "Be Faithful"

"Keep the faith."	"I'm thinking of you every day."
"This was part of God's plan."	"What has helped you get through the past few days?"
"This was God's will."	"I hope things get easier for you."
"God works in mysterious ways."	"I can offer help, if you like."
"God tests our faith."	"It sounds hard, getting through these days."
"You need to pray more."	"I'll be sending you my thoughts and prayers."

### "Be Positive"

"Something good will come out of this."	"It sounds like it's impossible to see what's ahead."
"It happened for the best."	"I'm so sorry this has happened."
"You are lucky that your father died peacefully."	"I was so sad to hear the news about your father."
"Be grateful it wasn't worse."	"You've had to deal with a lot all at once."
"You shouldn't be so angry."	"It isn't fair, is it?"
"You're going to be just fine."	"I believe in you."
"Keep a positive attitude – it's better for your health."	"It's amazing to see you smile with all you are coping with."

### Asking "Why?"

"Why didn't you leave sooner?" (Your bad job, your abusive spouse, the approaching hurricane)	"Sounds like you were going through hell."
"Why didn't your sister call you sooner?"	"I'm sorry to hear no one called you in time."
"Why didn't you stop smoking when you found out about the blood clot?"	"It can be so hard to quit old habits."
"Why do you think God is putting you through this?"	"What you just told me sounds outrageous."

“Some Have It Harder”	
“Just think of what the Hurricane Katrina survivors have been through.”	“You already had enough on your plate.”
“You should feel lucky. What you are going through is nothing like what my mother’s generation went through.”	“I’m so sorry you’re going through this.”
“Your problem is not as bad as what my son is going through with cancer.”	“I am so sorry this has happened to you.”
“Get Over It”	
“It’s time to put this behind you.”	“This might take time.”
“You need to keep busy, and get back to work.”	“I believe you’ll know the right time to return to work.”
“You have your whole life ahead of you.”	“Allow some time for this.”
“Just think how you’ll be doing by this time next year.”	“Take all the time you need for yourself.”
“I Understand”	
“I understand how you feel.”	“I can only imagine how hard this must be.”
“I know what that’s like.”	“Do you mind telling me what it’s like?”
“I went through a tough time like that, too.”	Tell me more, if you like.”

(Adapted from “Good Housekeeping” magazine, December 2010)



## Help at School

Before a grieving student returns to the classroom, teachers should prepare other students in the class with the following steps:

- Explain the basic facts of what happened.
- Dispel any rumors.
- Explain the ways grief can express itself.
- Make students aware of what and how they say things.
- Give students examples of how they can help the returning student.
- Ask for volunteers to help tutor or partner with the returning student.
- Plan a "catch-up day" to help the returning student and any other students who are behind catch up with homework due to missed days. (This can be done on a regular basis so the student does not feel singled out.)

### Teachers should also:

- Find out what resources are available on campus and within the district.
- Evaluate the work the student has missed and select the most important assignments, tests and quizzes for the student to make up.
- Be available to the student—set up a weekly/biweekly conference time to review grades, talk about progress and how to continue reinforcing acclimation and success.
- Work closely with the other teachers and school counselors involved with the grieving student.
- Keep in contact with the student's parent(s) or guardian(s). This can be done via e-mail, phone and with a weekly grade check or progress report.
- Be sensitive throughout the year—especially around holidays, birthdays and anniversaries.

### Counselors and social workers should:

- Find out what resources are available on campus and within the district.
- Update teachers regularly on the student.
- Meet with the grieving student on a regular basis.
- Work closely with the other teachers and school counselors involved with the grieving student.
- Keep in contact with the student's parent(s) or guardian(s). This can be done via e-mail, phone, and with a weekly grade check or progress report.
- Be sensitive throughout the year, especially around holidays, birthdays and anniversaries.

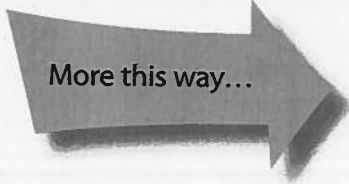
Here are some ways teachers and classmates can help grieving students get back on track with their school lives:

### Problem: Forgetfulness

The student may forget textbooks, supplies, tests, assignments, or reports.

### Solution

- Establish and reinforce routines and schedules.
- Have extra textbooks and supplies available in case they are forgotten.
- Have students write down important dates and information—even create a simple agenda form for the student to use.



More this way...

**Problem: Lack of concentration**

The student may have a difficult time staying focused and appear to be "day dreaming."

**Solution**

- Refocus student.
- Break information into smaller segments.
- Assign a partner, study buddy.
- Allow ample time to complete the assignment or task.
- Provide breaks as needed.

**Problem: Lack of interest or motivation**

The student may appear to be uninterested or even display a "why bother" attitude. He/she may be focusing on everything that has happened and may question the importance/relevance of school work.

**Solution**

- Meet weekly/biweekly to review grade, progress, problem areas.
- Encourage the student to use his/her experience to reach out to others.

**Problem: Lack of organization**

It may take a grieving student a lot longer to accomplish a given task. What once took 15 minutes to finish may now take an hour.

**Solution**

- Refocus student.
- Provide an agenda to help keep track of assignments and tests.
- Assign a partner to administer the test, quiz, project, or assignment.
- Allow ample time to complete a task.

**Problem: Inability to retain information**

The student may have difficulty retaining information. Help the student change study habits by providing notes and using some of the following tips. It may help to have the student do this initially with a partner and then alone.

**Solution**

- Outline reading material.
- Highlight important facts.
- Read "out loud" instead of silently.
- Complete homework in 20-minute segments with 5-minute breaks.

**Problem: Preoccupation with the event**

Students may appear to be "day dreaming" because their minds will wander back to what has happened. Even if they are doing something they enjoy, they will find their mind drifting back to the loss experience.

**Solution**

- Refocus student.
- Work on smaller amounts of information.
- Work in shorter increments of time.



**Problem: Impatience and lowered tolerance**

Grieving students may be impatient—especially if a peer complains of something trivial.

**Solution**

Make other students aware of what and how they say things around the grieving student.

- Have the student write about this frustration in a journal entry or work it into class discussion as it applies to the lesson (theme of a short story, current event, etc.)
- Remind the grieving student that other students may not have experienced a loss on that level and do not necessarily mean to be shallow or unfeeling/unthinking.
- Help the grieving student find a healthy outlet of expression for this frustration.

**Problem: Drop in grades**

Students may experience a drop in grades due to absences and all of the problems listed above. Make-up work may seem too overwhelming.

**Solution**

- Conference with the student, counselor and parent/guardian, and identify the most important assignments/tests/quizzes requiring make-up.
- Create a reasonable timeline for make-up work.
- Assign a class partner/tutor to help.
- Have the student complete only the designated work.
- Provide a weekly grade check to help student and parent/guardian monitor progress.

