



## Report to **PARENTS**

# Supporting Grieving Students During School Transition Challenges

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*Many students are grieving what has been lost during COVID-19 closures—chances to socialize with peers, be a senior in middle school, start kindergarten, or participate in sports or performing arts. Parents can use these tips to help their children overcome school transition-related challenges this school year.*

Times of transition and change can be particularly challenging for grieving students. Many students are grieving what has been lost during COVID-19 closures. Most have been affected by ongoing issues in the broader world as well—social justice, racial inequities, bitter political divides, the financial impact of the pandemic. Students who are grieving the death of a family member or loved one are part of this mix.

### Address Apprehensions

Students are excited to be with peers and start a new year. They might also have lingering fears about risks of illness or death. Families and caregivers can work with school leaders to provide honest, realistic reassurances about measures being taken to protect students in their schools.

### Recognize Children's Vulnerability

At times of transition, grieving children often are more vulnerable. This can mean the start of the school year, with new teachers, classmates, and classrooms. It can involve a change in schools or a change in their family—someone moving in or out. It can include the changes of puberty, the start of dating for older students.



### Be Honest

Students of all ages know things are still not back to “normal.” It isn’t necessary for families and caregivers to pretend that everything is OK when it clearly isn’t. Provide opportunities for your kids to talk about their experiences and concerns.

### Work Closely With Educators

It's important for families and caregivers to have open and ongoing communication with their child's school during changes at home so your child's teachers and principal can create a safer and more welcoming environment for your child at school.