

BEGIN AGAIN LIVING MINISTRIES

Supporting a Grieving Child or Teen

Honest communication, steady care, and age-appropriate support

A COMPLIMENTARY GUIDE FOR PARENTS, CAREGIVERS, AND SUPPORTIVE ADULTS

Compassionate guidance for caregiving, grief, and end-of-life transitions.

From Diagnosis to Goodbye™

Supporting a Grieving Child or Teen

Children and teenagers grieve in ways shaped by development, personality, family culture, and the relationship that was lost. They may move in and out of grief while still playing, studying, or spending time with friends.

Use this guide as a starting point for conversation. Individual needs and care plans may differ.

1. Use direct language

Say that the person died and explain what that means in simple terms. Euphemisms such as “went to sleep” can create fear or confusion.

2. Repeat and update information

Young people may ask the same questions many times. Give honest answers in manageable portions and correct misunderstandings gently.

3. Preserve routines and reassurance

Explain who will care for them and what will remain familiar. Predictable school, meals, activities, and bedtime can provide security.

Practical Guidance

1. Offer choices about rituals

Invite participation in funerals, memorials, visits, memory projects, or prayer, while explaining what will happen and allowing the child to decline.

2. Accept varied expressions

Grief may appear as sadness, play, irritability, withdrawal, physical complaints, risk-taking, or questions. Avoid demanding a particular emotional response.

3. Know when to seek added help

Persistent decline in functioning, severe anxiety, unsafe behavior, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, or prolonged inability to participate in daily life requires prompt professional attention.

My Next Steps

- ☐ Use the deceased person's name and invite memories.
- ☐ Tell school or childcare staff about the loss.
- ☐ Schedule regular, low-pressure check-ins.
- ☐ Model honest feelings without making the child responsible for adult emotions.
- ☐ Contact a pediatric clinician or grief professional when concerned.

You do not have to carry this journey alone. Support is available, and asking for help is an act of care.

About Begin Again Living Ministries

Begin Again Living Ministries offers compassionate education and support for individuals, families, caregivers, churches, and organizations navigating grief, caregiving, stress, and end-of-life transitions.

Visit: balministries.org

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