

RESOURCES

Hospice Peterborough

325 London Street, Peterborough

(705) 742-4042

www.hospicepeterborough.org

Bereaved Families of Ontario – Peterborough

(705)743-7233

www.bfoptbo.ca

www.kidsgrief.ca

www.childrenandyouthgriefnetwork.ca

(If you are looking to be connected to Supports outside of the area, please contact our Office for assistance)



Victim Services Unit
500 Water Street
Peterborough, ON K9J 7Y4



VICTIM SERVICES UNIT

Grief Support for Children

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday

0700hrs-1700hrs

victimservices@peterborough.ca



THE 5 C'S OF WHAT CHILDREN WANT TO KNOW

- Did I CAUSE it?
- Can I CATCH it?
- Could I CURE it?
- Who is going to take CARE of me?
- How can I stay CONNECTED to my person?

Informing a Child of a Death

FIRST, take a moment to absorb the information yourself before informing the child.

- Use honest and straightforward language such as death, dying, and died.
- Explain that when a body dies, it stops working and can never work again – the body doesn't get cold, hungry, or feel pain.
- Be mindful of the information you share, you can always add information, but you cannot take it away.
- Respond to questions honestly – it is OK to say “I'm going to need some time to figure it out and will come back to you to talk about it”
- Explain that grief is all of the feelings and thoughts we have when someone we love dies.
- Discuss possible emotional and physical aspects of grief (sadness, anger, loss of appetite, changes in sleep)
- Reassure them that there is no right or wrong way to grieve – as long as they are not putting themselves or others in danger.

How to Help

Listen and be present: Having an opportunity to tell his or her story is often beneficial to a child's healing process.

It's okay to ask: When in doubt, as a grieving child how you can help. Expect that you might get a range of answers or even a myriad of questions about grief.

Understand how children grief: Children will grief for the rest of their life. It is important to remember that each child has his or her own way of grieving.

Create opportunities for rituals: Rituals can give children tangible ways to acknowledge their grief and to honour the memory of those who have died.

Adapted from: childrenandyounggriefnetwork.com

It's OK to show your feelings – you can role model how to express and cope with grief.

The Power of Language

DO USE:

“Dead, death, died, cancer, ALS, substance use disorder, suicide etc”

TRY NOT TO USE:

“gone, lost, passed away, sleep”

“DIED” means that a body has stopped working and will never work again. The body cannot move, breathe, think, feel, see, smell, talk... The body does not feel pain or hunger or fear.

Explaining Overdose Death:

“Overdose” is when someone, accidentally or on purpose, takes too much of a substance and it affects their body's ability to work properly. This can cause the person's body to die.

Explaining Suicide Death:

“Suicide” is when a person causes her/his body to stop working. The body dies.