

TALKING ABOUT DEATH AND SUPPORTING THOSE WHO ARE GRIEVING

SUPPORTING GRIEVING CHILDREN

When it comes time to talk about death with a child it can be difficult to find the right words and many of us are hesitant to say anything for fear of saying the wrong thing. The thing is you don't have to say much or be perfect. Just being present with the child and willing to listen as they express their feelings will offer them comfort.

TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT THE DEATH OF A FRIEND

[When Your Child's Friend Dies](#)

Statements to Express Sympathy/Empathy to those who are Grieving

WHAT TO SAY	WHAT NOT TO SAY
I'm sad for you.	Death was a blessing.
How are you doing with all of this?	It was God's will.
I don't know why it happened.	It all happened for the best.
What's the hardest part for you?	Something good will come out of this.
You must really be hurting.	I understand/know just how you feel.
Take as much time as you need.	You should/shouldn't feel like...
I'm here, and I want to listen.	It's time to put it behind you now.
Thank you for sharing your feelings.	You will get over it.
I'm sorry you're sad/ angry/hurting	You should be over this by now.
I can't imagine how you must be feeling. I'm so sorry you're going through this.	He/she led a full life.
It can be hard to understand why things like this happen.	Be strong.
I'm ready to listen if you feel like talking.	Be strong for your mother, siblings, etc.
How can I help?	You'll be stronger for this.
I know you're feeling overwhelmed and sad. It's ok to cry.	

SYMPATHY MESSAGES: WHAT TO WRITE IN A CARD

The following phrases may be helpful to you in getting started:

I am so sorry for your loss.

I'm so sorry to hear that your (father) has died.

I was so saddened to hear about _____ passing.

I am really sorry to hear you are going through this.

I can't imagine how you are feeling right now.

I am at a loss for words.

It is not fair that you are having to go through this.

My heart is hurting for you.

I am thinking about you.

I am here if you need to talk.

If you want to tell me about it, I am here to talk.

How are you doing? I know this is a hard time for you and I am here if you need to talk.

You have my support during this hard time.

There are no words that will help, but just know I am here for you. I am going to be here for you through this.

You're in my thoughts and I'm here for whatever you need.

Please know that our family is keeping you and yours in our thoughts.

Know that we are all thinking of you. We are here for you if you need anything.

GRIEF REFERENCES & RESOURCES

[The Dougy Center](#)

[Help Your Kids Deal with Bereavement](#)

[Sesame Street Grief Resources](#)

[Grief Activities for Kids](#)

[National Alliance for Grieving Children](#)

[What's Your Grief](#)

[Coalition to Support Grieving Students](#)

[Addressing Grief](#)