



GriefCare for Families
Module 6: Moving Forward After GriefCare
Topic 2: Accepting grief as part of your life

We expect that grief will have a place in you and your children's lives. How, when and why you and your family are aware of grief's presence is variable and unique to each person and each family. What you experience when grief surges might vary depending on what activates you, your current emotional state, your family dynamics and what else is happening in your life. We hope you will accept your grief as a natural part of you and your children's lives.

Continue to think of grief as the form love takes when someone dies and keep in mind the following: You don't stop loving a person when they die and neither do your children. You might express your love in many ways. You might find ways to remember and honor your deceased family member. You may experience yearning for them and sadness that they are gone. Find moments to tell stories about them privately to yourself or share stories with your family or with others. It's important to accept the form your grief takes and try not to judge it. Do the same for your children. We hope you can see your way forward to a future that has purpose, meaning and possibilities for happiness.

How well does your child understand and accept grief in their lives? Are they on a reasonably even keel even though grief is still present? Have they found a way to be with their friends and share their grief with their closest friends? Have they found a way to talk about grief to people in their lives? Do they have people to talk with about their grief when it increases in intensity?

It's helpful to anticipate times that grief might increase for your family and to plan for these moments. There are some typical situations in which grief is likely to be more present. These include family holidays, your deceased friend or family member's birthday, other family birthdays or anniversaries, the anniversary of the death and other meaningful days that might be special for you or your family. Grief might increase when there is an important life event. You might miss your deceased friend or family member when someone in the family graduates from school, gets married, has a child, or at other special times. You might feel especially sad that they aren't here to share this event.

It's very natural for grief to increase at certain times. You can use a difficult time as an opportunity to honor the person who died. We suggested that you might want to give some thought to the best ways to take care of yourself and to let others help. We also encouraged you to plan things that can be pleasurable and celebratory for you and your child, even if you are also feeling sad.