## Developmental Stages of Grief:



Age	Thoughts	Feelings	Actions	Interventions
0–3 years			<ul><li>Cry</li><li>Cling</li><li>Exhibit regressive behavior</li></ul>	<ul><li>Hold the child</li><li>Reassure calmly</li></ul>
3–5 years	■ Loved one will return; loved one is just away	<ul> <li>Confused</li> <li>Anxious</li> <li>Fearful</li> <li>Separation anxiety</li> <li>Sad</li> <li>Angry</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Cry</li><li>Temper tantrum</li><li>Nightmares</li><li>Regress</li><li>Cling</li></ul>	<ul><li>Provide extra attention</li><li>Reassure calmly</li></ul>
6–9 years	<ul> <li>Wonder if loved one can return</li> <li>Believe deceased can still function</li> <li>Believe their actions or words caused the death</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Confused</li> <li>Anxious</li> <li>Fearful</li> <li>Separation anxiety</li> <li>Sad or angry</li> <li>Fearful they might die too</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Cry</li> <li>Temper tantrum</li> <li>Nightmares</li> <li>Regress</li> <li>Cling</li> <li>Difficulty in concentrating</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Provide extra attention</li> <li>Tell the truth         appropriately</li> <li>Reassure (not responsible for death)</li> <li>Encourage physical or artistic expression of grief</li> </ul>
9–12 years	<ul> <li>Understand finality and irreversibility of death</li> <li>Believe their actions or words caused the death</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Sad</li> <li>Confused</li> <li>Anxious</li> <li>Withdrawn</li> <li>Lonely</li> <li>Guilty</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Exhibit aggressive or impulsive behavior</li> <li>Engage in risky or dangerous behavior</li> <li>Obtain worse grades at school</li> <li>Have difficulty concentrating</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Provide extra attention</li> <li>Tell the truth         appropriately</li> <li>Reassure (not responsible for death)</li> <li>Encourage physical or artistic expression of grief</li> <li>Maintain structure, limits, and rules</li> </ul>
12–18 years	<ul> <li>Understand finality, irreversibility, nonfunctionality of death</li> <li>Believe their actions or words caused the death</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Sad</li> <li>Confused</li> <li>Anxious</li> <li>Withdrawn</li> <li>Lonely</li> <li>Guilty</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Exhibit aggressive or impulsive behavior</li> <li>Engage in risky or dangerous behavior</li> <li>Obtain worse grades at school</li> <li>Have difficulty</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Seek community and school support</li> <li>Maintain structure, limits, and rules</li> <li>Encourage physical or artistic expressions of grief</li> </ul>



## Developmental Stages of Grief

(Children's Grief Center of New Mexico)

<u>Age</u>	Concept of Death	Task to Master	<u>Grief</u> <u>Response</u>
Ages 2-5	Death is temporary	Permanent	Regression; Questions; Confusion
Elementary School Age	Starting to understand irreversibility; Interest in body and details of death	Not reversible	Regression; Questions; Repetitive questioning; Fear of death
Mid - High School Age	Ability to think abstractly. Can conceptualize death.	Universal; Unavoidable	"Adult-like response;" Denial, Anger, Depression.

Ask them to tell you what they know and understand, children often know more than parent realise

Try your best to give age appropriate information to help them understand what has just happened Prepare them for difficult news, acknowledge their loss

In the early days of a death or serious illness

Reassure them that even though as a parent you're upset, you will still take care of them Listen to and acknowledge their thoughts, feelings and opinions

Let them know it is fine to ask questions

## Online Resources:

WHAT'S YOUR GRIEF?





The Dougy Center

The National Center for Grieving Children & Families