



Ways to Support Children in Coping with Trauma or Loss

1. Take time to listen to their concerns; help them to feel safe; encourage expression of their feelings.
2. Acknowledge that trauma and loss are hard to handle for everybody.
3. Smile and hug often; use creative ways to help them express complex feelings.
4. Encourage them through their challenges with "I believe in you" messages.
5. Give age appropriate information about the critical event that is honest and direct.
6. Listen to their experience and respond without judgment.
7. Partner with children; help them decide how they want to deal with difficult "adult" things like funerals and remembrance anniversaries.
8. Let children know about YOUR difficult feelings and vulnerability.
9. Honor their uniqueness and individuality.
10. Affirm that all ways of experiencing grief are "normal".
11. Encourage them to take time for themselves and ask for what they need.
12. Let them know that you are available to talk or just to hang out, as they wish.