

CORONAVIRUS



LOSS OF A LOVED ONE
DURING A PANDEMIC

CHILDREN AGED 10-13



GRIEF DURING COVID-19

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NAVIGATING THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE DURING A PANDEMIC

Losing a loved one is devastating enough as it is, however, mourning during a pandemic presents a new set of challenges. As a parent, this will be a particularly difficult time for you and your child(ren); however, there are ways to get through this time and you are not alone.

1. SAYING GOODBYE

It can be difficult for your child to grapple with being unable to say goodbye to a loved one in person. Not being able to say goodbye in the way they would have liked may instill a sense that things are not resolved and can cause children to wonder about their loved one's last moments. It is important to acknowledge how painful this is for them and how unfair it must feel. Ensure they understand their loved one would have wanted to say goodbye on better terms and it was not their choice. Discuss with your child other ways they could say goodbye, such as lighting a candle, saying a prayer or poem, writing a letter, or visiting a special place.

2. MAKE THE MOST OF VIRTUAL SUPPORT

Grieving without normal daily routines and face-to-face support networks can be really difficult for your child. It is important to remind them that family and friends are still there, and they can still connect to others virtually through FaceTime or Zoom.

3. FUNERALS AND MEMORIALS

Explain to your child that lockdown restrictions mean that funerals are not happening as they normally would. Funerals and memorials may include only immediate family or friends. The loss of rituals surrounding death and the inability to engage in traditions that support the grieving process can make it much more difficult to cope. Ideas for a placeholder ritual may include; holding a vigil in the house or backyard or creating a collage, memory box, or altar together.



4. CREATE A SENSE OF NORMALCY

Think with your child about the activities that help them cope with difficult situations in normal life, and which of these they can still do during lockdown. These could be drawing, running, listening to music, talking to friends, watching a favourite movie, cooking/baking, or reading a book. Encourage them to keep doing these activities if they want to. Reassure them that it's okay to have a good time and enjoy something - and this does not take away from how much they care about their loved one.

5. ADDRESS FEELINGS OF ISOLATION

One of the greatest challenges of grieving in the age of COVID-19 is the isolation that the disease creates. Grief can be an isolating experience under normal circumstances, but social distancing and quarantine have made the process lonelier. As a parent, it is crucial that you provide comfort to your child by highlighting that they will continue to be cared for and loved no matter what. It is important to offer opportunities for them to talk to you about how they are feeling, while also giving them space to grieve.



1 IN EVERY 20 AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN
WILL EXPERIENCE THE
DEATH OF A PARENT BEFORE
THEY REACH THE AGE OF 18.

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SUPPORT FOR BEREAVED CHILDREN
AND THEIR FAMILIES**



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