

**Wellness Tips**

Developmental Ages and Possible Reactions to Death

| AGE | THINK | FEEL | Do |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3-5 years (preschool) | * Death is temporary and reversible * Finality of death is not evident * Death mixed up with trips, sleep * May wonder what deceased is doing | * Sad * Anxious * Withdrawn * Confused about changes * Angry * Scared * Cranky (feelings are acted out in   play) | * Cry * Fight * Are interested in dead things * Act as if death never happened |
| 6-9 years | * About the finality of death * About biological process of death * Death is related to mutilation * A spirit gets you when you die * About who will care for them if a parent dies * Their actions and words caused the death | * Sad * Anxious * Withdrawn * Confused about changes * Angry * Scared   Cranky (feelings are acted out in  play) | * Behave aggressively * Behave withdrawn * Experience nightmares * Act as if death never happened * Lack concentration * Have a decline in grades |
| 9-12 years | * About and understand the finality of death * Death is hard to talk about * That death may happen again, and feel anxious * About death with jocularity * About what will happen if their parent(s) die * Their actions and words caused the death | * Vulnerable * Anxious * Scared * Lonely * Confused * Angry * Sad * Abandoned * Guilty * Fearful * Worried * Isolated | * Behave aggressively * Behave withdrawn * Talk about the Physical aspects of death * Act like it never happened, not show feelings * Experience Nightmares * Lack concentration * Have a decline in grades |
| 12 years and up (teenagers) | * About and understand the finality of death * If they show their feelings they will be weak * They need to be in control of their feelings * About death with jocularity * Only about life before and after death * Their actions and words caused the death | * Vulnerable * Anxious * Scared * Lonely * Confused * Angry * Sad * Abandoned * Guilty * Fearful * Worried * Isolated | * Behave Impulsively * Argue, scream, fight * Allow themselves to be in dangerous situations * Grieve for what might have been * Experience Nightmares * Act like it never happened * Lack concentration * Have a decline in grades |
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