



## REMEMBER

- It's important for teens to know they are not alone in the middle of their grief.
- God's word talks a lot about grief and pain. Encouraging teens to memorize scripture and put it up in places they will see (ex. mirror or phone) to remind them that they are not alone and God understands.
- Psalm 34:18 - "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."
- Psalm 40:1-3 - "I waited patiently for the Lord to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along."



## RECOGNIZE

- Loss is far more common for teens than we often recognize. It comes in many forms from loss of a friendship, loss of a sense of importance or belonging, to losses within the family. How Teens process loss depends on what they believe the loss means for them and about them. Grieving a loss is a lot of work and takes time, but it is important that teens not become stuck in the loss and move on to healing.
- There is no right or wrong way to grieve. It can look a lot of ways, like:
  - shock & disbelief
  - anger & sadness
  - asking questions like 'What if...?'
  - guilt
  - feeling alone, like nobody understands
  - crying or being very quiet
  - sleeping a lot or not at all
- Remember there is no set pattern for grief and for many teens, this may be a first experience, meaning they'll have no frame of reference for what seems 'right' or 'appropriate'.



# GRIEF

lifeteams  
resources



## RESPOND

- **Help teens manage their emotions** with coping skills like deep breathing, journaling, drawing, or exercise.
- **Don't tell them how they should feel** or express their grief; their emotions need to be normalized as acceptable, even if they look different than they might for you.
- **Let teens know they're allowed to be happy**—even though this is a hard time.
- **Let them know it's ok to be angry** but it's not OK to turn that anger on others or turn it inward on themselves.
- **Help them express "if only" thoughts.** Mourn those losses with them and then invite them to put those thoughts to rest.
- **Make sure they know that this loss is not their responsibility.**
- **Watch for destructive coping mechanisms** like not eating, overeating and not sleeping.
- **Be there for the long haul, and/or connect them with other help** - recognize anniversaries of their loss if appropriate and continue to check in over time rather than assuming it has all cleared away.
- **Help them feel 'normal' by not changing your behaviour toward them.**



## RESOURCES

**whatsyourgrief.com** - Grief education, exploration, and expression in both practical and creative ways (articles, e-courses etc).

**kidshealth.org** - Search "grief" for resources and teen support.