



BE KIND FOR EVERYONE YOU MEET IS FIGHTING A HARD BATTLE

TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT SUICIDE

Communication

- > Be open and honest about the suicide– it's ok to use the words 'dead' or 'death'
- > Use language the child understands and that you are comfortable with
- > To avoid stigma, use the phrase 'took their life' rather than 'committed' suicide. This avoids reference to a crime
- > Answer facts in short simple sentences without unnecessary detail
- > Be available to listen and assist with any concerns your child may have
- > Respect their views with non-judgemental responses

Emotions and Actions

- > Give comfort, hugs, and reassurance as needed by your child
- > Stick to their day-to-day routine and schedules as much as possible
- > Reduce change to a minimum
- > Take time to prepare them for any further change that may be approaching
- > Allow your child to express all emotions in a safe way, e.g. find healthy ways to vent anger, it is okay to cry; emotional storms only last a short time.
- > Make time for just being together; take time out, re-establish recreational activities and outings as soon as you can

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD WHILE THEY GRIEVE

- > Take time to talk with your child about the person's life, not only their death
- > Teach your child the importance of making time to eat properly, exercise and rest
- > It is okay to have fun, encourage them to be kids, play, explore and laugh
- > Re-involve the child in chores and responsibilities as soon as they are ready to cope with them again
- > Reassure them about their short-term goals, let them know you are there to help them find ways to adjust to life without their loved one

SUGGESTED READING

- > *Healing Your Grieving Heart For Teens: 100 Practical Ideas*
By: Alan D. Wolfelt, PH.D.
- > *Helping Teens Cope with Death*
By: The Dougy Center



Teaching Effectively..... Learning Successfully



Suicide
Prevention
Coalition