



General Guidelines for Helping Children Cope with Death

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Do

1. Know your own beliefs.
2. Begin where the child is.
3. Be there.
4. Confront reality.
5. Allow and encourage expression of feelings.
6. Be truthful.
7. Include the child in family rituals.
8. Encourage remembrance.
9. Admit when you don't know the answer.
10. Use touch to communicate.
11. Start death education early, using naturally occurring events.
12. Recognize symptoms of grief and deal with the grief.
13. Accept differing reactions to death.

Don't

1. Praise stoicism.
2. Use euphemisms. ("passing away")
3. Be nonchalant.
4. Glamorize death.
5. Tell fairy tales and half truths.
6. Close the door to questions.
7. Be judgmental of feelings and behaviors.
8. Protect the child from exposure to experiences with death.
9. Encourage forgetting the deceased.
10. Encourage the child to be like the deceased.

