

“You have to keep moving. You have to keep going. Put one foot in front of the other, smile and just keep on rolling.” –KOBE BRYANT

There are no words that can fill the void created when tragedy strikes and someone dies. The grieving process may include a range of emotions from anger, sadness, and numbness to feelings of fondness and gratitude when reflecting on memories and happier times. There is no one way to grieve. The process looks different for everyone, and children and adults grieve differently. What’s important is to honor your and your child’s feelings and take care of yourself during this time. Below are some tips that may be helpful to you and the young people in your life.

- 1 Surround yourself and your child with a circle of support.** Your support system can be immensely helpful during this time. Talk to teammates, coaches, friends, family, and other people that you know and trust. Sharing feelings, memories and simply connecting with others can help in processing the grief and continuing to engage in life.
- 2 Honor your feelings.** Give yourself and your child permission to feel and express your feelings. These may change from one day or one moment to the next but feeling a range of emotions is part of the grief process. Writing about the feelings (keeping a notebook or writing letters), praying, taking a walk, simply being outside, or expressing yourself creatively (e.g., painting, drawing, music, etc.) can help to calm, ease, and settle feelings of discomfort.
- 3 Accept that “Why?” may be an unanswered question.** It’s natural to ask the question “why?” and this is especially true when someone dies unexpectedly or “before their time.” Unfortunately, there isn’t an answer to the “why?” question. Death is a part of life. A major aspect of the healing process is learning to find ways to accept the death in the absence of understanding “why” it happened.
- 4 Disconnect from social media and the news.** Constantly consuming information about the tragedy and loss can be overwhelming. Taking a break from social media allows you and your child time to pause and process your emotions without the added weight of digesting and processing others’ thoughts and feelings or being impacted by inaccurate information.
- 5 Take care of your physical health.** Eating and sleeping both are essential to maintaining your physical and emotional well-being and your ability to function while processing your grief. Maintaining your daily routine, to the extent possible, can also help you and your child in re-establishing a sense of normalcy as you move through this process.
- 6 Do something to honor the memory.** Think of a way to honor the memory of the person who died. This is how you keep their legacy going and carry them with you, by holding on to the good memories and sharing the positive impact they had on your life.
- 7 Seek additional help if needed.** If you need additional support or would simply like to speak to someone, [text TEAM](#) to [741741](#) for 24/7 support from a trained Crisis Counselor.