

GriefShare  
GriefShare

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*griefshare.org*  
*daily encouragement*  
*13 weeks*

## Groups in Fresno, California

GriefShare grief recovery support groups meeting weekly in Fresno.

Click on a group date to find out more information about the group.

### Current groups

Sponsor	Address	Dates
<b>The Bridge</b>	3438 E. Ashlan Ave Fresno, CA <i>206-4100</i>	<u>Wednesdays, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm</u> Aug 23, 2017 – Dec 13, 2017
<b>Campus Bible Church</b>	4710 North Maple Avenue Fresno, CA	<u>Sundays, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm</u> Sep 10, 2017 – Dec 3, 2017
<b>NorthPointe Community Church</b>	4625 W. Palo Alto Ave. Fresno, CA	<u>Thursdays, 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm</u> Aug 17, 2017 – Nov 9, 2017
<b>Cornelia Ave Southern Baptist</b>	2405 North Cornelia Ave Fresno, CA	<u>Mondays, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm</u> Sep 11, 2017 – Dec 4, 2017
<b>Bethany Church</b>	9161 N Maple Avenue Fresno, CA	<u>Wednesdays, 9:30 am – 11:00 am</u> Aug 23, 2017 – Nov 15, 2017

### Other possible locations

These sponsors have not entered group meeting times into our database, but may currently be offering sessions. Please contact them directly for details.

Sponsor	Address	Phone
<b>Northwest Church</b>	5415 N West Ave Fresno, CA	559-435-2200
<b>North Fresno Mennonite Brethren Church</b>	5724 North Fresno Street Fresno, CA	559-431-0333
<b>Mountain View Community Church</b>	3600 N Fowler Avenue Fresno, CA	559-291-9199
<b>Riverpark Bible Church</b>	7500 N. Millbrook Ave Fresno, CA	559-435-0190
<b>Valley Christian Center</b>	4649 E. Shields Ave. Fresno, CA	559-252-1901
<b>New Covenant Community Church</b>	1744 East Nees Fresno, CA	559-298-0688
<b>CrossCity Christian Church</b>	2777 E. Nees Avenue Fresno, CA	559-323-9675
<b>Woodward Park Baptist Church</b>	1801 E. Teaque Ave. Fresno, CA	559-298-7087

*- Duwayne Walker (adults)*  
*- Grief Share group 9/13-12/16 wed. nights 6pm Room 104.*  
*1/16-7pm Surviving the holidays Grief Share in bulletin 1st Sunday of November*

### GriefShare

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### Misc.

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### Share

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Email: [info@griefshare.org](mailto:info@griefshare.org) Phone: 800-395-5755 International: 919-562-2112

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# Should Your Child Attend the Funeral or Memorial Service?

## 4 Steps to Help You Decide

When someone dies, parents and caregivers often struggle to decide if their child should attend the funeral or memorial service for the deceased. As a society, we want to shelter children from the painful reality of death, and we struggle with the discomfort of talking about it. In the past, children were kept from attending funerals and memorials because adults felt they were unable to handle it emotionally. But this way of thinking has led to children feeling left out and unable to find healthy closure.

Death is all around us when we watch television or movies, or when we experience the death of a first pet. It is important to remember that children grieve too even if it looks different than the grieving process of an adult. Children have their own grieving process that is unique to the individual child and depends on several factors, including: developmental age, personality, relationship to the deceased, exposure to death, communication about the circumstances, and family support. There is no quick or easy answer when deciding if a child should attend a funeral or memorial service but there are helpful ways to determine the best answer for you, your child and your family.

### 1 *Age and Development*

A **child's age** should be taken into account when making the decision of attending a service. There is no minimum age requirement, but children's developmental age has an impact on their understanding of the finality of death and what death means to them. Young children under the age of 5 do not always grasp that death is final. Avoid using euphemisms like "in a better place," "lost," or "went to sleep" with children. Such phrases can be confusing, scary or misinterpreted by children even though it may bring comfort to an adult. The use of concrete language and terms like "death" and "died" are important in helping children comprehend the meaning and finality of death.

### 2 *Relationship to the Deceased*

Assess your **child's relationship to the deceased**. Children should have an opportunity for closure with the deceased whether at the funeral, memorial service or another ceremony that can be created specifically for them. With this in mind, a child should not be forced to attend the funeral or memorial service. Two questions that can be helpful in making this decision are:

- What was the child's relationship to the deceased?
- How does the child perceive the significance of the relationship to the deceased?

The answers to these questions can help determine if a child should attend the funeral or other memorial service.

### 3

## *Prepare and Plan*

With **preparation and planning**, you can help create comfort in an uncomfortable situation by anticipating your child's needs. Before talking to your child about the funeral or memorial service, gather as many details as possible and communicate those details in age-appropriate language so your child knows what to expect. Preparing and communicating with your child can be done in a variety of ways, including reading books that explain funerals, visiting or showing pictures of where the ceremony will take place, reviewing the sequence of events that will occur during the services, and explaining language relevant to the service. Consider any religious and cultural customs that may occur at the service as your child may be unaware of them. Prepare them for the varying adult reactions that may occur during a service as they may have never witnessed the variety of intense emotions from loved ones.

Depending on your role in the funeral or memorial service, assign a close friend or family member who your child trusts to help him or her feel supported. If your child needs to leave the service at any time, let your child know the assigned friend or family member will accompany him or her. This plan should be discussed and communicated ahead of time with your child. As mentioned above, if children choose not to attend the funeral, their decision should be respected and other options for closure can be created with them, as funerals are not for everyone.

### 4

## *Seek Support and Guidance*

Family members, friends and professionals that you trust can help provide **support and guidance** as you and your child make a decision about attending the funeral. Be open and honest as you communicate with your child and let your child take the lead as you consider his or her age, development, personality, and relationship with the deceased. This is a personal decision for you and your child, and there is no one size fits all answer. Grief is a journey filled with ups and downs, and everyone copes with it the best they can along the way.

*"If a child is old enough to love, he or she is old enough to grieve."*

*Linda Goldman, *Life & Loss**



## The Center for Grieving Children

The Center for Grieving Children helps children grieving a death heal and grow through their grief, while strengthening families, communities, and professionals' understanding of how best to respond to their needs.

3300 Henry Avenue, Suite 110 | Philadelphia, PA 19129

P: 267-437-3123 | F: 267-437-3206

[WWW.GRIEVINGCHILDREN.ORG](http://WWW.GRIEVINGCHILDREN.ORG)



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the center for grieving children philadelphia

# Grief & the Holidays

## Finding Hope and Comfort

Holidays can be particularly difficult when you are grieving the death of a loved one. Traditions which used to make holidays happy and festive can now evoke sorrow and sad memories. After the death of a family member, it can be difficult to take care of yourself and the children in your family.

While grief can be a winding road filled with ups and downs, there are ways to help you and your family feel supported during the holidays. By being prepared, seeking support, creating new meaning and traditions, and practicing healthy self-care, the holidays can be more manageable and new memories can be made.



### *Have a Plan & Be Prepared*

- ◇ Make a plan ahead of time for the day or days leading up to the holiday to help you feel more prepared.
- ◇ Decide who you want to share the holiday with and how you would like to celebrate.
- ◇ Identify people who can support you on that day, and what you will do if you have difficulty coping.
- ◇ Talk with the children in your family as a group in an open and honest manner about the upcoming holidays in order to help the children know what to expect as well.
  - ◆ Talk about what specifically might be hard for each person during the holidays in order to have support ready at those times.
  - ◆ Each family member may have a different view on how they want to observe the holiday and remember the family member, or some may choose not to acknowledge or celebrate the holiday as each person grieves differently.
- ◇ Let family members know their feelings are valid and they are still allowed to enjoy the holidays even though they may feel sad and be grieving.

***Remember:*** *Although you can't plan for everything, preparing yourself and your family ahead of time will likely make the time easier and more enjoyable.*



### *Communicate with Friends and Family*

- ◇ Reach out to family, friends, or professionals who can support you during the holidays. Let them know what might be difficult for you and what they can do to help you and the children in your family.
- ◇ Encourage the children in your family to reach out to their friends and school professionals for support, too.
- ◇ Help children identify trusting adults in their life who can support them.
- ◇ Be honest with children about the difficulty you may be having.
- ◇ Acknowledge that it is okay to cry and that you all will get through the holidays together, even though things might be different following the death.



## *Create New Meaning or Rituals*

- ◇ Your family may have had holiday traditions and rituals that involved the person who died. While some families may choose to continue with their usual holiday traditions, it may be difficult for others to continue those traditions without that person present.
- ◇ Allow children to discuss their feelings and think of new traditions can be a very healing exercise for the family.
- ◇ Incorporate the person who died into the holidays.
  - ◆ Tell stories, look at photographs, or make the person's favorite food. There are many other ways to keep their memory alive during the holidays.
- ◇ While changing traditions may be scary, the new traditions do not have to be permanent. You can always change them back in the future if you choose.

***Remember*** *It is okay to celebrate holidays differently after a death in the family. Old traditions may end and your family can create new traditions and rituals that may help your family cope at the holidays.*



## *Practice Self-Care*

- ◇ Take time for yourself during the holidays, as it can be a busy time to care for others by buying presents, cooking meals, or traveling to visit family.
- ◇ Practice deep breathing, listen to favorite song, write in a journal, or go for a run.
  - ◆ These routines and others can help manage your grief and other emotions.
  - ◆ There are also many books and other resources available in print and online for children and adults that focus on grief and the holidays.
- ◇ Incorporate self-care into your holiday plan and help the children in your family to do the same.

**"To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die." – Thomas Campbell**



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## Grief and Loss Book Resources

*-Available through the Fresno County Library as of 10/24/2017*

**When Dinosaurs Die- A Guide to Understanding Death**. Brown, Laurie and Brown, Mark

**Everett Anderson's Goodbye**. Clifton, Lucille

**The Next Place**. Hanson, Warren

**Sad Isn't Bad**. Mundy, Michaelene

**We Had An Angel Instead**. Schwiebert, Pat ( loss of a sibling)

**What's Heaven**. Shriver, Maria

### Additional Titles:

**Fire In My Heart, Ice In My Veins**. Traisman, Enid

**Tear Soup**. Schwiebert, Pat & DeKlyen, Chuck

**After a Murder: A Workbook for Grieving Kids**. Dougy Center

**After A Suicide: A Workbook for Grieving Kids**. Dougy Center

**The Invisible String**. Karst, Patrice

**Am I Like My Daddy?** Blesy, Marcy

