

NOTE: A variety of lesson plan options are provided. Select ONE per week.

Week 2 Lesson Plans

Understand Concepts of Grief & Loss

What Helps the Mind, Body & Spirit When You're Grieving

Who: Kids, Teens, Groups

Materials: paper, markers, pens, dry erase board, and/or poster board

Why: Grief can show up in our bodies as a sluggishness, excess energy, stomach, and sleep upsets. Our minds may experience slow/foggy feeling in the brain, inability to concentrate, focus, and overthinking. Emotional/spiritual/social support may come from nature, community, even this support group. Provide education on the impact grief has on these three areas and help participants come up with ideas that help. Please share that these ideas may be helpful to some and not others. What is helpful can be unique to each person just like their grief is unique to them.

How to use: On the board or posterboard list these three headings: Mind, Body, Spirit. You may also list these on a sheet of paper for each participant to brainstorm ways that can help improve these three areas. Has participants to brainstorm ways to help these areas. Examples:

1. Body/movement
 - a. Walking, running, spending time outside
 - b. Dancing, yoga, swimming, sports
 - c. Punching a pillow
 - d. Crafting
 - e. Pay attention to what sorts of foods help with stomach upsets and activities that help with sleep.
2. Mind
 - a. Learning new things
 - b. Meditation
 - c. Reading
 - d. Listening to music
 - e. Games
3. Emotional/Spiritual/social - your community may be nature, church, or a support group
 - a. Meditation
 - b. Ceremony/ritual, which can offer sense of control, routine, structure
 - c. Making or listening to music
 - d. Coloring/ drawing/painting
 - e. Humor – which may look like dark, silly or wry humor
 - f. Cooking
 - g. Volunteering

Bill of Rights for Teens

Who: Teens, Groups

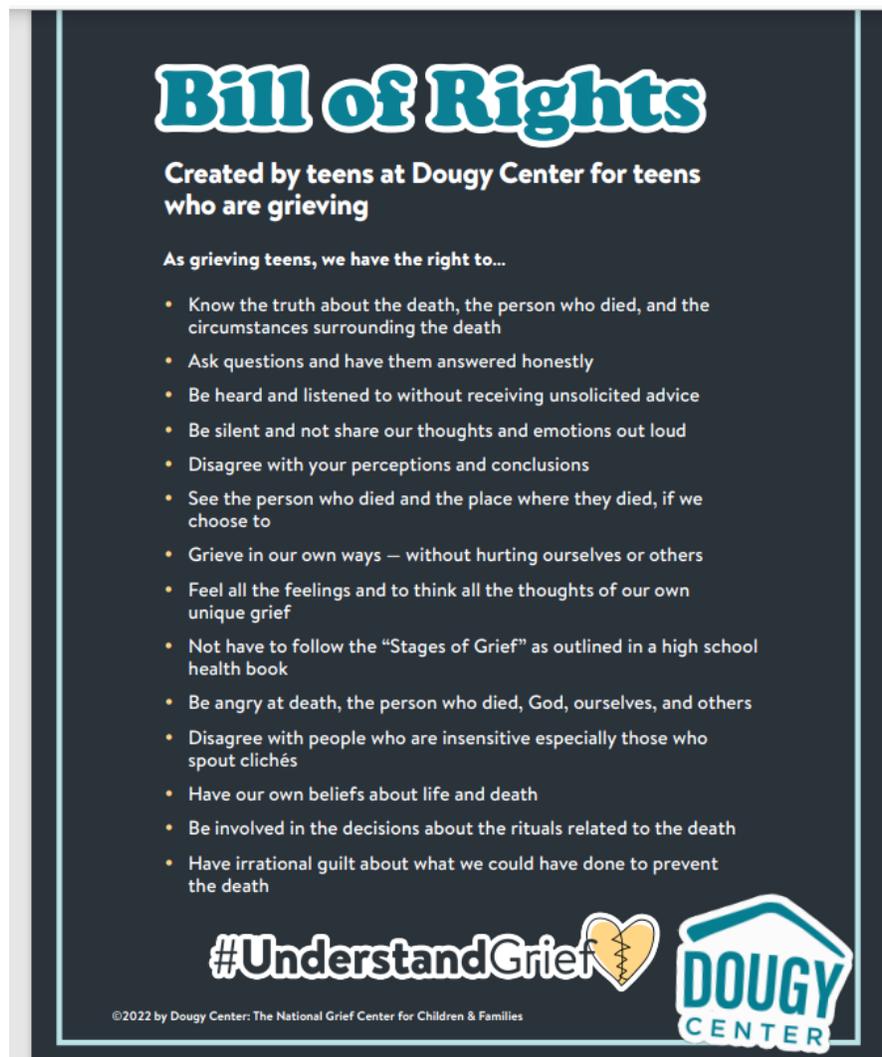
Materials: Bill of Rights (Dougy Center) PDF

Why: Provide psychoeducation on the Teens Bill of Rights. Show samples of Teen Bill of rights and discuss what ones fit and what may not. Create discussion on anything the group would change or add.

SHARE:

When someone close to us dies, we experience something called grief. You may have heard about grief but are not quite sure what it is all about. Grief can be feelings: anger, sadness, worry, relief, fear, numbness. Or it may be thoughts, such as “Who will take care of me now that my mom died?” “Why do people get cancer?,” or “What will happen next?” Sometimes, grief affects our bodies. We feel sleepy or have trouble falling asleep. We may not feel like eating. We may have headaches or stomachaches or suddenly don’t feel like doing things we usually like to do, such as playing or going to school. All these experiences are normal for grieving kids/teens.

You might have wondered: will I ever get over this? There is no magic pill for grief. It’s not something you “get over.” A lot of people say grief is like a journey. Although it never ends, things do get better, and there are things you can do to smooth over the rough and rocky places along the way. Every kid/teen grieves differently. There are no right or wrong ways to grieve.



Bill of Rights

Created by teens at Dougy Center for teens who are grieving

As grieving teens, we have the right to...

- Know the truth about the death, the person who died, and the circumstances surrounding the death
- Ask questions and have them answered honestly
- Be heard and listened to without receiving unsolicited advice
- Be silent and not share our thoughts and emotions out loud
- Disagree with your perceptions and conclusions
- See the person who died and the place where they died, if we choose to
- Grieve in our own ways – without hurting ourselves or others
- Feel all the feelings and to think all the thoughts of our own unique grief
- Not have to follow the “Stages of Grief” as outlined in a high school health book
- Be angry at death, the person who died, God, ourselves, and others
- Disagree with people who are insensitive especially those who spout clichés
- Have our own beliefs about life and death
- Be involved in the decisions about the rituals related to the death
- Have irrational guilt about what we could have done to prevent the death

#UnderstandGrief  

©2022 by Dougy Center: The National Grief Center for Children & Families

Bill of Rights for Children

Who: Kids, Groups

Materials: Bill of Rights (Doughy Center) PDF

Why: Provide psychoeducation on the Children's Bill of Rights. Show sample of Children's Bill of rights and discuss what ones fit and what may not. Create discussion on anything the group would change or add.

SHARE:

When someone close to us dies, we experience something called grief. You may have heard about grief but are not quite sure what it is all about. Grief can be feelings: anger, sadness, worry, relief, fear, numbness. Or it may be thoughts, such as "Who will take care of me now that my mom died?" "Why do people get cancer?," or "What will happen next?" Sometimes, grief affects our bodies. We feel sleepy or have trouble falling asleep. We may not feel like eating. We may have headaches or stomachaches or suddenly don't feel like doing things we usually like to do, such as playing or going to school. All these experiences are normal for grieving kids/teens. Sometimes we may experience a "burst of emotion" like a cloud burst on a sunny day that comes out of no where. These "Grief Bursts" can be triggered by our senses: see, hear, taste, smell along with memories, thoughts and activities.

You might have wondered: will I ever get over this? There is no magic pill for grief. It's not something you "get over." A lot of people say grief is like a journey. Although it never ends, things do get better, and there are things you can do to smooth over the rough and rocky places along the way. Every kid/teen grieves differently. There are no right or wrong ways to grieve.

Grieving Child's Bill of Rights (Alan D. Wolfelt)

I have the right...

...to my own unique feelings about the death.

Mad, sad, lonely, scared, relieved, numb, or nothing at all.

No one will feel exactly like I do.

...to talk about my grief whenever I feel like talking.

When I need to talk, I will find someone who will listen and love me When I don't need to talk that is OK, too.

...to show my feelings of grief in my own way.

When they are hurting, some kids like to play so they'll feel better for awhile. I can play or laugh, too. I might also get mad or misbehave. This doesn't mean I am bad; it just means that I have scary feelings that I need help with.

... to use my beliefs about God to help me with my grief.

Praying might make feel better and closer to the person who has died.

... to try and figure out why the person I loved died.

But it's OK if I don't find the answer. "Why" questions about life and death are the hardest questions in the world.

... to think and talk about my memories of the person who died.

Sometimes those memories will be happy and sometimes they might be sad. Either way, memories help me keep alive my love for the person who died.

...to move toward and feel my grief and, over time, to heal.

I'll go on to live a happy life, but the life and death of the person who died will always be a part of me. I'll always miss the person who died.

“Way – No Way” Game

Who: Kids, Groups

Materials: “Way – No Way” statement sheet

Why: Provide grief education and dispels myths of death; promotes discussion about grief & loss issues.

How to use: Read each statement to participant(s). Have participant(s) put a thumb up if they agree with the statement or a thumb down if they disagree. Discuss statements and follow-up with the additional discussion prompts that are in parenthesis next to each statement.

Variation: If participants are active, this can be played as a game. Mark a line down the center of the room with tape. One side of the room is the “Way” side (agree with statement) and the other side of the room is the “No Way” side (disagree with statement). All participants stand on the center of the line at the beginning of the game. As facilitator reads statements aloud, participant(s) stand on or jump to the side of the line that feels true for them. Again, Discuss statements and follow-up with additional discussion prompts

“Grief Activity”

Who: Kids, Teens, Groups

Materials: Blank paper, markers, pencils

Why: Provides an opportunity for participant(s) to share about their individual grief experience; promotes discussion about the similarities and differences in the grief experience for different group or family members.

How to use: Provide participant(s) with a blank piece of paper. Have participant(s) write, draw pictures and/or describe what grief is like for them. Allow participant(s) the opportunity to share their work.

Provided by Clinical Grief Activities Working with Bereaved Children. Providence Hospice of Seattle

Now and Then

Who: Kids, Teens, Groups

Materials: Blank paper, markers, pencils

Why: Provides an opportunity for participant(s) to identify and express changes that have occurred because of the death. Stimulate discussion about our feeling responses to change.

Instructions:

1. Draw a line down the middle of the page.
2. Have participants draw/paste pictures of their family before and after death.
3. What has changed? What is the same?

Provided by Hospice & Home Care of Snohomish County

Question Basket

Who: Kids, Teens, Groups

Materials: Basket, pre-written questions cut from sheet, blank paper, pens, pencils

Why: Provides an opportunity for participant(s) to identify and express changes that have occurred because of the death. Explore negative and positive aspects of these changes. Discover commonality of feelings/experiences with group.

How to use: A basket holding pre-written slips of paper is passed around the group. A card is picked out and read aloud. Each person may respond to the question. When everyone has had their say, the basket is passed to the next person and the process continues.

Variation: Participants are asked to write “I used to be... but now...” as many times as they choose. These are read without comment and followed by discussion of common threads.

Provided by BRIDGES: A Center for Grieving Children

Comments by Teenagers in Mourning

Who: Teens, Groups

Materials: Comments by Teenagers in Mourning Handout, blank paper, pens, pencils

Why: Provides an opportunity for participant(s) to identify and express changes that have occurred because of the death. Explore negative feedback. Discover commonality of feelings/experiences with group.

How to use: Read or share Comments by Teenagers in Mourning Handout. Ask participants if they want to add any comments to the list. Write them on the board or add to a master list; then follow up with discussion.

Common Myths about Grief

Who: Teens, Groups

Materials: Common Myths about Grief Handout, blank paper, pens, pencils

Why: Provides an opportunity for participant(s) to identify and explore the impact that the myths of grief have had on them. Explore negative feedback. Discover commonality of feelings/experiences with group.

How to use: Part 1: Read or share Common Myths about Grief Handout. Ask participants if they want to add any comments to the list. Write them on the board or add to a master list followed by discussion.

It is not an easy process to change traditions and long-held beliefs or expectations. However, we can re-learn and make changes when we have strong beliefs that it is in our best interest to do so. Some of the difficulties lie in the fact that we are impacted by the beliefs and feelings of those around us. While we may have a desire to change, others around us may not. It may take preparation and family discussion to do things differently, often with very beneficial results for the whole family.

Part 2: Use Establishing Realistic Expectations for your Grief Handout – read or share – followed by discussion

Part

Provided by: Teen Talk – Grief Support Group – Good Samaritan Hospice, Puyallup, WA