

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

Week 1 Lesson Plans

All About Me

Processing the circumstances or event

Creating a Safe Environment

Who: Kids, Teens, Groups

Materials: Play dough, kinetic sand, fidget toys, puzzle, markers/paper

Why: Provides a safe, non-threatening environment that is welcoming and inviting: opens and invites discussion; materials occupy fidgety, nervous hands.

How to use: Place items on table or floor at beginning of visit. Invite participant(s) to use materials.

- A. Introduce yourself brief.
- B. Invite participants to play with items on hand while you talk.
- C. Share any losses you may have experienced and why you think a group like this is important.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BEING HERE?

- A. Begin group by asking the student's how they feel about coming to this group. It is normal to want to hide our pain and not want to come to a group like this at first. Maybe discuss some of the excused participants thought of to not come i.e. homework, not feeling well etc.

SHARE THE GROUND RULES

- A. This is to be a safe place where we respect one another. There is no right or wrong way to feel when we are grieving.
- B. This is not a therapy group where your talk is to be analyzed. We are here to support one another by our presence, sharing and being good listeners.

TODAY'S GOAL: Create ground rules for each group meeting

- C. Introduce: "Talking Stick" or "Talking Teddy Bear" – and explain whomever hold the items talks while the rest of the group listens. Note: another item can be used as group determines.
- D. Confidentiality: Explain that, "What is said in group, stays in group." Explain the only way this rule is broken is if member states that they want to hurt themselves or others.
- E. It's okay to pass. Explain that conversations may be hard at times, and it is okay not to share if they do not wish to. No person in group should ever be forced to share. If a question is asked of someone, that person must feel free to pass without judgement. Just attending group is a way to how their participation.
Remember: It's okay to have fun, play and laugh.
- F. No interruptions—let other's finish. Sharing can be hard. If we are cut short, we may chose not to share again or feel that what we had to say was not important.

- G. Crying is acceptable and helpful. Acknowledge the courage it takes to cry in front of others. Sharing our tears can be the very thing that encourages others to express their feelings.
- H. Other rules: One person talks at a time. Listen to others. Respect other's opinions. Ask participants what other rules they might want to add.

Creating a Safe Environment

Who: Kids, Teens, Groups

Materials: Ice-Breaker Activity Sheet

Why: Provides a safe, non-threatening environment that is welcoming and inviting, creates group rapport.

How to use: Select one activity from the Ice-Breaker Activity Sheet to start each session

All About Me

Who: Kids, Teens, Groups

Materials: "All About Me" worksheet, markers, pens

Why: Assists in building rapport; helps engage participant(s) in conversation about who they are and what they like; assists facilitator to know what activities may be appropriate to use in the future.

How to use: Provide a worksheet to each participant and ask them to complete. Once completed share.

Anagram

Who: Kids, Teens, Groups

Materials: white or colored paper, markers, pens

Why: Encourages participant(s) to introduce their loved ones; helps participant(s) begin to understand and share feelings.

How to use: Invite participant(s) to either choose the name of the person who died or a word that describes their relationship with to that person. Examples: Sarah, Mom, Pappy. Have participant(s) write the word down the left side of a piece of paper. Next to each letter, have participant(s) write descriptive words using the letter as the letter of the word.

Example: **M**arvelously

Outstanding

Maker of cookies

Timeline

Who: Kids, Teens, Groups

Materials: "All About Me" worksheet, markers, pens, stickers

Why: Allows participant(s) to identify positive and negative significant events in their lives. Alternatively, it can provide them an opportunity to review detailed information around the event (accident/death).

How to use: Have participant(s) choose a piece of paper and draw a line on the paper. Lines can be curvy, straight, jagged etc.; the uniqueness of the line reflects the uniqueness of the individual and their story. The beginning of the line is their date of birth and the end of the line is today's date. Along the line, have them make marks that represent significant changes in their family, personality, friendships, homes, schools, as well as any new responsibilities they now have because of these changes. Using stickers, or markers, they can

write or draw pictures or symbols to represent the loss event and other changes marked on this timeline. They can also describe how they felt, before, during and after the times marked. Provide participants with an opportunity to share their timelines. This can be followed by a discussion about their observations, changes, and the loss that I associated with change.

Alternate: You can also focus on a smaller amount of time, such as the day before, of, and/or after the death of the loved one. For example, start the timeline on a day they learned their loved one was ill (or of the death) and end a few days after the funeral/memorial service. This can assist children to understand feelings related to specific memories.

All About My Loved One

Who: Kids, Teens, Groups

Materials: “All About My Loved One” worksheet, markers, pens

Why: Provides a forum to begin to share about loved ones who have died. Assists the facilitator to understand what information participant(s) know about the death of their loved one.

How to use: Provide a worksheet to each participant and ask them to complete. Once completed share.

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

Telling One’s Story

Who: Kids, Teens, Groups

Materials: Copies of “Telling One’s Story” (One for each participant)

Why: To encourage teens to focus on the circumstances of the death of their loved one and how it has affected them. To provide an opportunity to reflect upon and share about any memorial services which may have taken place.

Background Information:

After a person dies, it is very important for the bereaved person to talk about the many dimensions of the experience. The more a person tells the details of how their loved one died, and details about the burial, and how the person may have responded, the more real the death becomes. As teens tell their stories, parts of another person’s story may connect with their own, whereas another part may be different. The teens begin to observe that there may be common threads about grief, yet each person’s grief is unique. They are being exposed to the wide range of emotions that fit under the category of “grief.” Often, the teens have spoken about not feeling so alone. There are others who seem to understand what they are experiencing.

Instructions:

1. Make copies of “Telling One’s Story.” Fold the copies hiding Part B temporarily. This allows the group to focus on one topic at a time. Distribute the copies.
2. Using Part A, concentrate on the story of the loved one’s death and the teens’ immediate response. Encourage the teens to jot down notes in response to the questions if they wish.
3. Invite the teens to share their stories. If there is any hesitation, a peer facilitator or a leader could briefly share a personal experience of grief. This can provide a model for sharing.
4. If there is time, move on to Part B to focus on the memorializing of the loved one. However, you may decide to wait until the following session.

5. Optional: Follow up by highlighting through conversation or by listing on poster board the many feelings of grief. This list could be used at a later meeting.

TELLING ONE'S STORY (Teen Copy)

These questions may be helpful in recalling events around the death of your loved one. If it helps, jot down notes.

Part A

Who died? How did he or she die? Was it a short or long time ago? How did you find out that your loved one died? Who told you? What was your immediate reaction after hearing of the death? Did you see your loved one after the death? How do you feel now?

Part B

What was it like for you to see (or not see) your loved one? Was there a funeral, shiva, or other kind of memorial? Were you involved in the service? What parts were really difficult? What parts were okay? What memory of the person who has died makes you feel good?