



Helping Children Cope with Loss & Trauma

Maintain your child's usual routines

Listen a bit more to them about, their day at school and on the weekend, and how it's gone... maybe your child talks a lot, maybe a little. Try to be more available to them.

Recognise that it's ok to be sad.... maybe you feel quite sad about what has happened too, kids seeing you have a little cry and then moving on is helpful for them to model. Normalise this for them. Some parents just try to cheer kids up....better just to say "it's sad, I feel sad too."

Help your child express some positive memories of the person (if a loss has occurred) ...like he/she was great at football, or was a good singer or good at spelling, whatever it is.

Talk to other friends from your club or team if you like, you are a real local community... it's helpful not to feel alone just now....this incident or loss might be triggering other memories of people you or your child have known, who have passed as well...so a little more grief may arise. This may in turn mean you and/or your child talks to another family member about your/their thoughts or feelings. If you become worried for yourself or your child, get some once off assistance, a confidential counselling session for you and/or your family can be valuable.

Kids will move in and out of grief.... one moment remembering, one moment back kicking the ball around the yard.... kids are like this. Just keep to the routines, dinner time, bath/shower time, TV/relax, homework time, sport time etc. This will help them through.

See other trusted extended family members, who love your kids and know their habits....grandparents, aunts and uncles, can be very helpful listeners and supports for all of your family.

Reduce the use of alcohol for self-soothing, usually this only masks the later effects of grief and means you are less able to be there for your children's needs and one another.

Use other supports as needed, try not to isolate yourself or your family, keep your interests going, sport connections, church connections are helpful, friendships, mates etc.

Keep physical exercise routines, regular meals, walks in the fresh air..... lots of this will be available in your area or nearby at parks, reserves, by the river or at the beach or event in the mountains....and keep times for relaxation, be gentle with yourselves....this maintains well-being.