

Enter Date

Dear Enter School Name Parents/Guardians,

As you may be aware, this morning there was an accident that has impacted our school community. At this time, we have not been give permission to discuss the details. However, this situation might raise many emotions, concerns, and questions for our entire school, especially with our students. Our goal is to assist our school family in understanding and to provide some helpful suggestions for coping. Our school-based mental health and district support professionals will be available to offer support and resources individually as needed. Please feel free to reach out to discuss any concerns/questions with any of the professionals listed below.

Enter information below with email addresses you can also include a google form to request assistance

**School Counselors:**

**Mental Health Practitioner:**

**Social Worker:**

**School Psychologist:**

**FRYSC:**

We also recognize that you, as parents/guardians, may want to help your child as they cope with this loss should you chose to share the information with them. At the bottom of this letter you will find some suggestions for talking with your child about grief, as well as a list of community resources. Thank you for your support and for being an important part of our Enter School name family.

Sincerely,

Enter Principal/Administrator and email here

# **Helping Children Cope with Grief**

Your child's reaction to death will be determined by his/her developmental level and age.

**Ages 5-9:** Children are beginning to understand that death is permanent, but not universal. Death is often personified as a ghost or boogeyman. Children will often express their grief through play.

**Ages 9-12:** Children understand that death is permanent, personal, and universal. They understand they, too, will die someday. Death is seen as happening to only the old or the very sick. They are often fascinated with the details of death. Grief may be exhibited through physical complaints, moodiness, changes in sleeping and eating patterns, or isolation from peers.

**Ages 12+:** Most adolescents have reached adult levels of understanding about death. Many have very intense emotions about death and do spend time thinking about death. Some adolescents challenge death by participating in dare-devil activities, such as drag racing or drug experimentation.

## **The following are some suggestions for helping your child cope with the death of a loved one:**

- Understand the kinds of feelings that your child may have. Fear, sadness, anger, and confusion are all normal reactions. Your child may express these feelings in conversation or through his/her actions.
- Allow your child to talk about the death and ask questions. Answer questions as simply as you can. It's ok to say that you don't know how to answer all of the questions.
- Have your child draw pictures of his/her feelings.
- Explain the ritual of funeral ceremonies. Have your child participate in supervised grief rituals as he/she desires. Remember, your child's imagination about death may be more frightening than the reality.
- Resume your regular family/school activities and schedules as soon as possible. Routines are one good way to help your child feel secure.
- Reassure your child that you are healthy, you are careful when you drive, and that you expect to be around for a long time.
- Monitor and evaluate your child's stress level. During these times stress is expected but extreme levels of stress can compromise the immune system.
- Seek help if you have questions about your child's behavior. Express your concerns with your school's counselor, teacher, or principal.
- Seek help from the list of community partners below should your child exhibit signs of crisis or extreme stress.

## **Community Resources (edit to include local resources)**

### **Seven Counties Services/Brooklawn Bellewood Programs For Acute and CSU services:**

502-589-8070. For emergencies, Crises and Information Center is open 24 hours a day 502-589-4313 or 800-221-0446 All locations and services running, Offering Telehealth Services and in person sessions via appointment.

**Suicide Prevention Hotline:** Call (800) 273-8255 anytime for crisis support.

**The Brook Hospital's (Child & Adolescent Program) Updates:** Call Dupont (502) 896-0495 or KMI (502) 426-6380 for any referrals or questions, Conducting face to face evaluations 24/7, Tele-Assessments using the ZOOM applications 24/7

**UofL Health – Peace Hospital (children and adolescents in crisis) Call 502-451-3333.** Assessments: Face to face or via Zoom / Tele-health

**National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) of Louisville 502-588-2008 or [namilouisville.org](http://namilouisville.org)** Find local resources and programming