

Throughout The Year

Throughout the year the Grief Support Coordinators will contact you about bereavement programs for families as they become available, such as new community resources and upcoming groups.

Every year our hospital holds a Celebration of Life Remembering the Children Service to honor the children who have died. Families and staff gather in May for this special time. You will receive a personal invitation to this service.

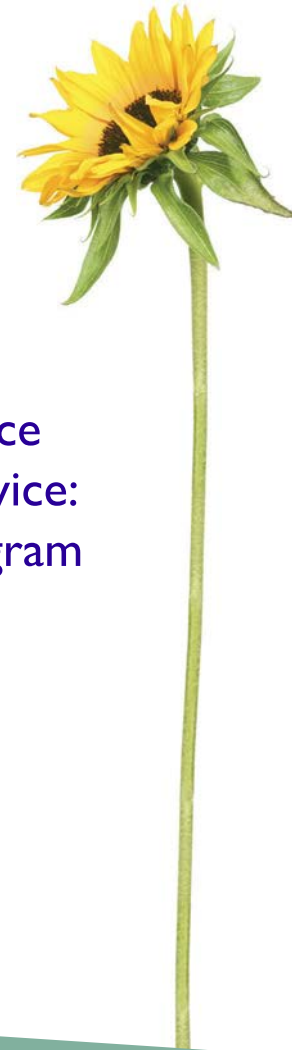
Please know that we continue to care about how you are doing, and ongoing support is available as you need.

when a
child dies

Children's Hospice Palliative Care Service: Grief Support Program

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“What we have once enjoyed

We can never lose

All that we love deeply

Becomes a part of us”

Helen Keller

This Time of Grief

The end of a child's life is a difficult experience. Whether your loss is sudden or expected, the unimaginable has happened. It is normal to wonder what the grief experience may be like and how you will manage the hours and days ahead.

Some experiences other families have shared include:

- Feeling like being in a fog or a bad nightmare
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Inability to engage in day to day activities
- Overwhelming feelings of sadness, despair, guilt, anger and blame
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns
- Questioning and reviewing all that has happened.

Managing These Days

It is important to find ways to take good care of yourself:

- Allow others to help you and your family with some of your daily needs
- See your family doctor if you are concerned about any experiences you are having, such as difficulty sleeping, anxiety, or loss of appetite
- Build some routine into your day, such as regular meal times
- Engage in physical activity, such as walking
- ~~Drink plenty of water~~
• Acknowledge and express your emotions, as difficult as this may be.

The Grief Support Program offers ongoing bereavement care.

The Grief Support Coordinators will make arrangements to provide you with a bereavement folder that includes reading materials and information on community resources. Additional support is available through:

- Individual & couple grief support and counseling
- Referrals to community resources
- Grief Support Groups
- Facilitating follow-up with your child's care team if desired.

The journey of grief and the need for support varies. Bereavement Services are available any time.

We at Alberta Children's Hospital want to express our heartfelt condolences over the death of your child.

Although grief is a natural response to loss, it can be an overwhelming, confusing and sometimes frightening experience. Each parent, child, grandparent and extended family member may react differently with their grief. There is no one way to grieve. Sometimes families find it helpful to have additional support to understand this grief.

We are very sorry for your loss. Please let us know if there is anything we can do for you.

For more information or to talk with a Grief Support Coordinator, please call:

403-955-5463

Supporting you through this difficult time

