

# Top 10 Tips for Supporting Grieving Children and Youth

Children and youth who have attended Lighthouse grief support groups over the years, have taught us a lot about the ways people in their lives can help support them through a very difficult time.

## CHILDREN & YOUTH NEED...

**1** ...people to understand that kids don't "get over" grief. They will grieve the loss of the person who died throughout their life. Holidays and other special days are especially hard. The grief will never completely go away but with patience and understanding from others, they can get through it.

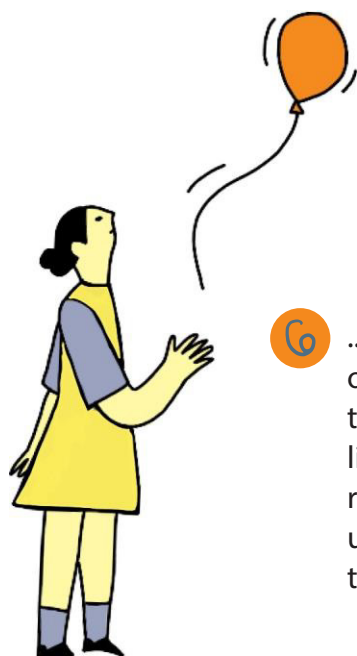
**2** ...people to talk honestly with them about what happened to the person who died.



**3** ...to be included in decisions about who is told about the death and how much is shared (especially at school).

**5** ...people not to tell them they know exactly how they feel, even if they have had a similar loss. Their grief and feelings are their own.

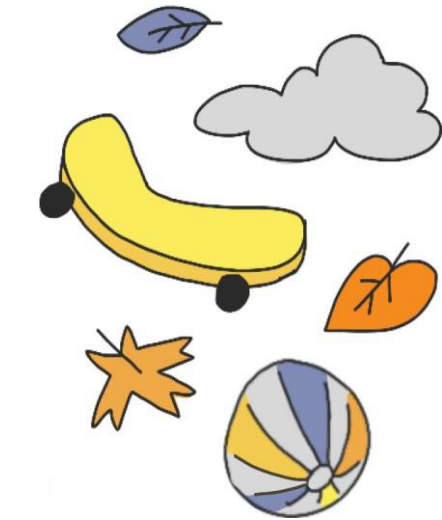
**4** ...people to understand that the death of a pet is not the same as a death of a parent or sibling, and to not make that comparison, even if you are trying to help.



**6** ...people to not avoid them or be afraid to ask about the person who died. They like having opportunities to remember them, as well as understanding if some days they prefer not to talk.



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**7** ...understanding if they want to focus on other parts of their life, like friends, sports, and extracurricular activities, and not feel judged for taking a break from their grief.



**8** ...permission and acceptance for ALL feelings they experience in their grief, including anger and frustration.



**9** ...teachers to understand that the student may not be able to concentrate in class and on schoolwork after someone important to them has died. This may last a while and come up again at times when their is triggered.

**9** ...to be treated like a normal kid. They don't want to stand out as being different from their classmates and friends.

