

Grief Reactions and Interventions Differ by Age/Cognitive Development

Adolescents

Common Belief of this Age Group	Fears	Suggested Intervention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adolescents start to examine the meaning of life and death. • They may question our social customs or rituals and are concerned about how others react. • They may glorify an event or person. • Death is an aberration which may cause feelings about injustice. • They may avoid any typical adult signs of mourning such as crying. • Their energy can appear to come in great spurts and their responses can be unpredictable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adolescents experience both anxiety and denial about their own mortality, "It can't happen to me!". • An initial reaction to the death of a teacher may be anxiety about goals interfered with. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help students to recognize the signs of grief. • Allow them to express their grief as they see fit, even if it seems inappropriate to adults. • Students should be encouraged to get adequate rest and food in order to cope with the stress of loss. • Encourage them to stay involved in normal activities.

It may be helpful to reprint this page for staff.

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