Beyond Words:
Caring for the Grieving Child
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Disclosure
Marian Sokol, PhD, has no relationships with commercial companies to disclose.
Blair Thompson, MDiv, has no relationships with commercial companies to disclose.

Learning Objectives
At the end of this presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Discuss the physiological, psychological, and emotional impact from death loss
2. Compare theories of grief & mourning including multidimensional research regarding childhood grief
3. Educate parents/caregivers about appropriate interventions for grieving children

Why are we (a small, local nonprofit) here today at the Medical School?
To raise participant awareness of:
• The physiological impact of childhood grief
• The prevalence of childhood grief
• The long-term impact of maladaptive grief if no interventions are made

A Neglected and Misunderstood Process:
Cultural Approach to Grief Recovery
1. Bury your feelings
2. Replace your loss
3. Grieve alone
4. Give it time (because time heals all wounds)
5. Plan to live with regret
6. Never trust again

Understanding Childhood Grief
Essential Information
• Children grieve differently, according to their developmental stages
• The circumstances of the death (i.e. “type of death loss”) make a difference
• Grief often begins before a death occurs

Children’s Grief Treatment

Theories that Inform (and don’t inform) our Work:

• 5 Stages of Grief
  (Elizabeth Kubler-Ross)

Video Clip: Grief Giraffe

Children’s Grief Treatment

Theories that Inform our Work:

• 5 Stages of Grief
  (Elizabeth Kubler-Ross)
• The Four Tasks of Mourning
  (Dr. J. William Worden)
• Multidimensional Grief Informed Theory
  (Drs. Julie Kaplow and Christopher Layne)

The Four Tasks of Mourning

Worden (2008)

1. Accept the reality of the loss
2. Experience the pain of grief
3. Adjust to an environment with the deceased missing
4. Find an enduring relationship with the deceased while embarking on a new life

Multidimensional Grief Theory

Layne, Kaplow, & Pynoos (2011)

• Separation Distress
• Existential/Identity Distress
• Circumstance-Related Distress

What do we do at CBC?

Therapeutic Modalities & Objectives

• Expressive Arts and Play Therapy
• Peer Support Groups
• Honoring and Memorializing the Deceased
• Envisioning a Future Path
How & Where CBC Provides Services

- Highly Trained Therapists
- State of the Art Facilities
- Support Groups, Individual Counseling, Camps, Off-site
- Services at no cost to families
- Participate in National Network
- Bexar and Surrounding; Rio Grande Valley

Grief: The Power to Transform
CBCST Children’s Artwork

CBCST Children’s Artwork 2

Q & A

Thank You!

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