



Chapter Seven: Impact of Grief, Loss, and Trauma

I. Lesson Plan

- A. Purpose: To learn about the unique issues impacting military families—particularly children and youth—and to identify behavioral and emotional reactions associated with grief, loss, and trauma.
- B. Objectives:
 - 1. Understand general child and youth reactions to grief, loss, and trauma at various developmental stages.
 - 2. Identify academic, behavioral, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual impact of grief, loss, and trauma on youth.
 - 3. Identify adult strategies to provide support and assistance.
- C. Time: 120 minutes
- D. Preparation/Materials Needed:
 - ✪ Easel, flip chart, markers, PowerPoint slides, computer, and LCD projector

II. Training Session Content

- A. PowerPoint Slides
 - Slide 7-1: Chapter 7 Impact of Grief, Loss, and Trauma
 - Slide 7-2: Circumstances Impacting Military Families
 - Slide 7-3: What is a Casualty?
 - Slide 7-4: Casualty Statuses
 - Slide 7-5: Six Basic Concepts of Grief
 - Slide 7-6: The Grief and Loss Process (Kubler-Ross)
 - Slide 7-7: Adult Reactions to Grief and Loss
 - Slide 7-8: Children/Youth Reactions to Grief and Loss
 - Slide 7-9: Academic Responses of Grieving Child/Youth
 - Slide 7-10: Behavioral Responses of Grieving Child/Youth
 - Slide 7-11: Emotional Responses of Grieving Child/Youth
 - Slide 7-12: Social Responses of Grieving Child/Youth
 - Slide 7-13: Physical Responses of Grieving Child/Youth
 - Slide 7-14: Spiritual Responses of Grieving Child/Youth
 - Slide 7-15: Developmental Responses: Infants and Toddlers
 - Slide 7-16: How to Help: Infants and Toddlers

- Slide 7-17: Developmental Responses: Preschool Child
- Slide 7-18: How to Help: Preschool Child
- Slide 7-19: Developmental Responses: Elementary School Child
- Slide 7-20: How to Help: Elementary School Child
- Slide 7-21: Developmental Responses: Middle School Youth
- Slide 7-22: How to Help: Middle School Youth
- Slide 7-23: Developmental Responses: High School Youth
- Slide 7-24: How to Help: High School Youth
- Slide 7-25: Coping with Death
- Slide 7-26: Common Mistakes When Dealing with Death
- Slide 7-27: Count on Grief, Loss, and Death to...
- Slide 7-28: Brainstorm Strategies to Support Children and Youth (Group Activity)

- B. Activity and Directions
 1. Review slides with participants.
 2. Allow them to share their experiences.

III. Additional Resources on the Flash Drive

- A. Children and Grief: What They Know, How They Feel, How to Help
- B. Resources for Wounded or Injured Servicemembers and their Families
- C. America at War: Our Attitude Makes a Difference
- D. America at War: Helping Children Cope
- E. Fears
- F. Drugs, Alcohol, and Your Kid
- G. Reactions and Guidelines for Children Following Trauma/Disaster
 1. What to Expect after Trauma: Possible Reactions in Elementary School Students
 2. What to Expect after Trauma: Possible Reactions in Middle School Students
 3. What to Expect after Trauma: Possible Reactions in High School Students

IV. Evaluation

- A. Reflection Questions
 1. What did you learn (or re-learn) about the grief/loss process?
 2. What personal or professional experiences have you had in dealing with the grief/loss issues of children and youth?
 3. How have these experiences impacted you?
- B. Application Questions
 1. What can you do in the future to be sensitive to the needs of children and youth dealing with grief, loss, and trauma?
 2. How can OMK teams support children/youth in our communities coping with the grief and loss associated with the deployment, injury or death of a parent or loved one?

Chapter 7: Impact of Grief, Loss, and Trauma on Children and Youth

Operation: Military Kids
Ready, Set, Go! Training

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-1: Chapter 7 Impact of Grief, Loss, and Trauma

Content of this slide adapted from: N/A

Materials Needed: Trainer and participant manuals
PowerPoint slides
Flip chart paper & pens

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Share purpose and objectives of this chapter.

Say: *The purpose of this chapter is to learn about the unique issues impacting military families, particularly children and youth, and to identify behavioral and emotional reactions associated with grief, loss, and trauma.*

The objectives include: understanding general child and youth reactions at various developmental stages to grief, loss, trauma, and death; identify academic, behavioral, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual impact; and identify specific adult strategies to provide support and assistance to children and youth.

What types of circumstances impact military families and result in grief, loss, or trauma?

(Group brainstorm)



Ready, Set, Go!

Slide 7-2: Circumstances Impacting Military Families

Content of this slide adapted from: N/A

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Encourage participants to respond to the following question.

Say: *What types of circumstances impact military families and result in grief, loss, or trauma-related responses?*

- Do:**
- Facilitate group brainstorming and record responses on flip chart.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion below.

Say: *Along with deployment, reintegration, and other issues, casualties are one of the major events impacting military families when it comes to grief, loss, and trauma.*

In the next few slides we will take a closer look at what is meant when the term casualty is used.

What is a Casualty?

- “Any person who is lost to the organization by reason of having been declared beleaguered, besieged, captured, dead, diseased, detained, duty status whereabouts unknown, injured, ill, interned, missing, missing in action, or wounded.”
- Types: Hostile and Non-Hostile

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-3: What is a Casualty?

Content of this slide adapted from: National Military Family Association www.nmfa.org, DoD Joint Publication 1-02, and Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1300.18.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion below.

Say: *The military definition of casualty encompasses more than injury and death. The next slide will outline the seven casualty statuses as defined by the Department of Defense.*

Casualty Statuses

- Deceased
- Duty status—whereabouts unknown
- Missing
- Very seriously ill or injured
- Seriously ill or injured
- Incapacitating illness or injury
- Not seriously injured

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-4: Casualty Statuses

Content of this slide adapted from: National Military Family Association www.nmfa.org, DoD Joint Publication 1-02, and Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1300.18.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion below.

Say: *These seven casualty statuses illustrate levels of severity ranging from mild forms of injury and illness, to more severe forms of injury and illness, to, ultimately, death.*

Military families dealing with any casualty-related circumstances or situations will find themselves directly impacted by the emotions and behaviors associated with grief, loss, and trauma.

Say: *It is important for professionals working with military families to be able to identify grief, loss, and trauma related emotions and behaviors—particularly with children and youth—and in turn connect them with available support systems to help them cope effectively with these emotions and behaviors.*

Six Basic Concepts of Grief

- Grief is a natural reaction to change, loss, or death.
- Each person's grieving experience is unique.
- There are no "right" or "wrong" ways to grieve.
- All individuals walk through the grieving process in their own timeframes and in their own ways.
- Grief comes in waves—times of great intensity followed by times of relief. There is no reasoning or pattern and it can hit with little warning.
- Grieving never ends. It is something the person will not permanently "get over."

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-5: Six Basic Concepts of Grief

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org and *Discovering Permission to Grieve* in the *Special Care Series* by Doug Manning, insightbooks.com.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: Some participants may be uncomfortable talking about this topic. Trainer empathy and understanding should be kept in mind at all times when facilitating these discussions.

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion below.

Say: *All human beings, regardless of age, experience these six basic concepts of grief. This, of course, is also true for military families and youth coping with these issues.*

Numerous studies indicate that grieving can last up to two years for any individual dealing with a significant change, loss, or death.

Do: • Encourage participants to respond to the following questions.

Say: *Let's take a closer and more personal look at these issues for a moment. Raise your hand in response to the following questions. Have any of you...*

- *Experienced a change in which you experienced grief?*
- *Experienced a loss?*
- *Experienced a death?*

Do: • Note the similarities and differences among the group as a whole when it comes to their experiences with grief, loss, and trauma.
• Upon conclusion of brainstorming session, emphasize the following points.

Say: *Grieving is a natural human response. It is experienced by all human beings some time during our lifetimes. It is a topic we often don't feel comfortable talking openly about or know how to deal with effectively.*

It is an issue that directly impacts many military families, children, and youth.

The Grief and Loss Process: Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

- Shock
- Denial (Survival)
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Acceptance

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-6: The Grief and Loss Process: Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

Content of this slide adapted from: *On Death and Dying* by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion below.

Say: *The grief and loss process is unique to each individual—like a thumbprint.*

Children and youth have different reactions based on their ages and stages of development. The following slides will explore this further.

It is important to understand grief and loss issues because they are often experienced to some degree by Service Members, families, children, and youth when dealing with issues related to deployment and reintegration.

Adult Reactions to Grief and Loss

- Denial
- Difficulty finding consolation
- Irritability and mood swings
- Sleep difficulties
- Change in eating habits
- Low motivation
- Difficulty problem solving
- Fear of being alone
- Use of substances to medicate
- Vulnerable immune system
- Other reactions?

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-7: Adult Reactions to Grief and Loss

Content of this slide adapted from: *Life After Loss: How to Help Others Through the Grieving Process* by Theresa McIntier, Carondelet Management Institute.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Encourage participation in the discussion below.

Say: *Please share any additional ways, not listed on the slide, in which you have witnessed grief or loss reactions by adults.*

- Do:**
- Emphasize the key points of the discussion as follows.

Say: *It is important to remember that adults may be grieving at the same time as children and youth. This may make them physically and/or emotionally unavailable to provide the necessary support for the children and youth.*

This is why our understanding of these issues and the support we can provide professionally to children and youth is so critical.

Children/Youth Reactions to Grief and Loss

- Children & Youth...
 - Tend to go in and out of grief
 - Developmental stage will influence their reactions
 - All cannot talk openly about their loss and feelings
 - May not seem to be affected at all (external vs. internal responses or “survival mode”)
 - Play is one way in particular they make sense of the changes in their world
 - Not unusual for them to experience physical reactions
 - Need to grieve any significant loss/change/death at all developmental stages for healthy resolution

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-8: Children/Youth Reactions to Grief and Loss

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Encourage participants to participate in the following discussion.

Say: *Please share any additional ways, not listed on the slide, that you may have witnessed grief or loss reactions by children and youth.*

- Do:**
- Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *Children and youth grieve differently than adults.*

Say: *Children and youth need to grieve loss, change, and death at all developmental ages and stages.*

It is important to keep the doors of communication open with children and youth even if they appear to be unaffected or uninterested in talking about the grief and loss, change, and/or death.

In time, all grieving children and youth will eventually display some changes in behavior that are indicated on the following slides.

It is important for adults to be aware of and respond to these changes in healthy and supportive ways.

Academic Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

- Inability to focus or concentrate
- Failing or declining grades
- Incomplete or poor quality of work
- Increased absence or reluctance to go to school
- Forgetful, memory loss
- Over achievement, trying to be perfect
- Inattentiveness
- Daydreaming

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-9: Academic Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Encourage participants to respond to the following question.

Say: *Have any of you seen any other child or youth academic responses to grief and loss not listed on this slide?*

- Do:**
- Facilitate discussion as needed.

Behavioral Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

- Disruptive behaviors, noisy outbursts
- Aggressive behaviors, frequent fighting
- Non-compliance to requests
- Increase in risk-taking or unsafe behaviors
- Isolation or withdrawal
- Regressive behaviors to a time when things felt more safe and in control
- High need for attention
- A need to check in with parent/significant other

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-10: Behavioral Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Encourage participants to respond to the following question.

Say: *Have any of you seen any other child or youth behavioral responses to grief and loss not listed on this slide?*

- Do:**
- Facilitate discussion as needed.

Emotional Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

- Insecurity, issues of abandonment, safety concerns
- Concern over being treated differently from others
- Fear, guilt, anger, regret, sadness, confusion
- “I don’t care” attitude
- Depression, hopelessness, intense sadness
- Overly sensitive, frequently tearful, irritable
- Appears unaffected by change/loss/death
- Preoccupation, wanting details
- Recurring thoughts of death, suicide

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-11: Emotional Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Encourage participants to respond to the following question.

Say: *Have any of you seen any other child or youth emotional responses to grief and loss not listed on this slide?*

- Do:**
- Facilitate discussion as needed.

Social Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Withdrawal from activities and sports
- Use of alcohol and other drugs
- Changes in relationships with teachers and peers
- Changes in family roles
- Wanting to be physically close to safe adult
- Sexual acting out
- Stealing, shoplifting
- Difficulty being in a group or crowd

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-12: Social Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Encourage participants to respond to the following question.

Say: *Have any of you seen any other child or youth social responses to grief and loss not listed on this slide?*

- Do:**
- Facilitate discussion as needed.

Physical Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

- Stomachaches, headaches, heartaches
- Frequent accidents or injuries
- Nightmares, dreams, or sleep difficulties
- Loss of appetite or increased eating
- Low energy, weakness
- Nausea, upset stomach, hives, rashes, etc.
- Increased illnesses, low resistance
- Rapid heartbeat

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-13: Physical Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Encourage participants to respond to the following question.

Say: *Have any of you seen any other child or youth physical responses to grief and loss not listed on this slide?*

- Do:**
- Facilitate discussion as needed.

Spiritual Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

- Anger at God or Higher Power
- Questions of “Why me?” and “Why now?”
- Questions about meaning of life
- Confusion
- Feelings of being alone in the universe
- Doubting or questioning current beliefs
- Sense of meaninglessness about the future
- Changes in values, questioning what is important

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-14: Spiritual Responses of the Grieving Child/Youth

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Encourage participants to respond to the following question.

Say: *Have seen any other child or youth spiritual responses to grief and loss not listed on this slide?*

- Do:**
- Facilitate discussion as needed.

Developmental Responses: Infants and Toddlers

- Intuitive sense something serious has happened
- General anxiety
- Crying
- Sleeplessness
- Excessive sleeping
- Stomach problems
- Clinging, needing to be held
- Separation anxiety
- Biting
- Throwing things
- Regression through baby talk, bed wetting
- Irritability
- Temper tantrums
- Clumsiness

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-15: Developmental Responses: Infants and Toddlers

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *Infants and toddlers know intuitively that something has happened but don't have the verbal skills to articulate their feelings.*

It is important to be aware of changes in behavior and to respond with support as outlined on the following slide.

How To Help: Infants and Toddlers

- Lots of holding, additional nurturing, and physical contact
- Consistent routine, including regular meal and bed times
- Rules and limits which are concrete and specific
- Short, truthful statements about what happened
- Making time for play, both physical and imaginative

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-16: How to Help: Infants and Toddlers

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *Physical touch, nurturing, and consistent structure are key components to helping infants and toddlers feel safe and supported during times of grief and loss, change, and/or death.*

Developmental Responses: Preschool Child

- See change/loss/death as abandonment
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns
- Wanting to be dressed or fed
- Thumb sucking
- Baby talk
- Wanting a bottle
- Bed wetting
- General irritability
- Concerns about safety and abandonment
- General confusion

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-17: Developmental Responses: Preschool Child

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *Preschool children see grief, loss, change, and especially death as abandonment, so it is important to reassure them that it is not about them—it is not their fault.*

Regression in behavior will most likely occur. It is important to put this in context with the child's grief and loss response.

Be sure to provide consistent nurturing and structure during this time to assure children they are safe and will not be abandoned by remaining caregivers.

How To Help: Preschool Child

- Use simple and honest answers
- Be prepared to answer same questions over and over again
- Include child in rituals around loss/death
- Support child in his/her play
- Allow for anger and physical expression
- Maintain consistent structure and routines
- Allow to act younger for a while
- Hold, nurture, and give lots of physical attention
- Encourage/allow fun and happy times
- Have books available
- Model by sharing personal anecdotes as appropriate

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-18: How To Help: Preschool Child

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *It is important to be honest and patient with children when dealing with their questions of why, how, etc., related to the grieving process.*

Emotional responses from children such as anger and resistance are common reactions to grief and loss at this age and stage.

Developmentally appropriate nurturing and consistent structure are key components to helping preschool children feel safe and supported during times of grief and loss, change, and/or death.

Developmental Responses: Elementary School Child

- Begin questioning how things will be same or different
- Want to see change/loss/death as reversible but also beginning to understand that it is final
- Regression
- Fighting, anger
- Difficulty paying attention and concentrating
- Daydreaming
- Not completing homework assignments
- Sleepiness
- Withdrawal

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-19: Developmental Responses: Elementary School Child

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *Children may struggle tremendously at this age and stage with realizing and accepting that grief, loss, change, and/or death is completely final.*

They may mistakenly blame themselves for grief and loss, change, and death. It is important to let them know it is not their fault.

Defiant and angry behaviors are common responses of grieving children at this age. A balanced response of caring, support, and accountability by concerned others is key to healthy resolution of these emotions.

How To Help: Elementary School Child

- Answer questions as clearly and accurately as possible
- Provide creative outlets (art, music, journal, etc.)
- Help identify and use support systems
- Work with student around academic workload
- Encourage taking breaks and some time alone
- Allow for expression of feelings and emotions
- Maintain routines and structure but allow for flexibility
- Give choices whenever possible
- Share that you care and are thinking about them
- Create “safe space” for child to go to as needed

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-20: How to Help: Elementary School Child

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *It is important to provide detailed information as needed to help children understand grief and loss, change, and death from their perspective.*

Creative outlets, such as art, music, sports, etc., can provide healthy alternatives for excess emotional and physical energy.

Developmentally appropriate nurturing and consistent structure—even if the child is resistant—are key components to helping the elementary school child feel safe and supported during times of grief and loss, change, and/or death.

Developmental Responses: Middle School Youth

- Experience range of emotions impacted by physical/hormonal development
- Comprehend change/loss/death as final and unavoidable
- Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness may increase risk-taking behaviors
- Argumentative, anger, fighting
- Withdrawal, sullenness
- Need healthy physical outlets
- Lack of concentration
- Risk-taking behaviors (alcohol/drugs, sexual acting out, stealing)
- Unpredictable ups and downs or moodiness
- Erratic, inconsistent reactions

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-21: Developmental Responses: Middle School Youth

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *Defiant, angry, and acting out behaviors are common responses of the grieving child at this age. A balanced response of caring, support, and accountability by concerned others is key to healthy resolution of these emotions.*

There is high potential at this age and stage for youth to turn to risk-taking behaviors as a way to cope with the stress associated with grief and loss.

Students at this age and stage struggle with clear and direct expression of emotions related to grief and loss, change, and death. It is most important to see what they are saying—not with words but with their behaviors.

How To Help: Middle School Youth

- Expect and accept mood swings
- Provide supportive environment where student can share, when needed
- Anticipate increased physical concerns, illness, body aches, pains
- Allow to choose with whom and how s/he gets support
- Encourage participation in support group
- Allow flexibility in completing school work

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-22: How to Help: Middle School Youth

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *Extreme emotional ups and downs are common responses for youth grieving at this age and stage.*

Developmentally appropriate nurturing and consistent structure—even if the youth is resistant—are key components to helping them feel safe and supported during times of grief and loss, change, and/or death.

Developmental Responses: High School Youth

- Appear to use “adult” approaches to problem solving and abstract thinking to deal with grief
- May struggle with their vulnerability because they want very much to be independent
- May assume responsibility for family
- Withdrawal from adults
- Angry outbursts
- Increased risk-taking behavior
- Pushing the limits of rules
- Lack of concentration, inability to focus
- Hanging out with friends
- “Sad” or “strong” face
- Sleepiness, exhaustion

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-23: Developmental Responses: High School Youth

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *High school youth might appear to be coping like adults but they may also be struggling with their ability to ask for much-needed support, nurture, and structure to help them cope with grief and loss, change, and death.*

Defiant behavior, anger, and acting out behavior are common responses of grieving youth at this age. A balanced response of caring, support, and accountability by concerned others is key to healthy resolution of these emotions.

Potential is high at this age and stage for youth to turn to risk-taking behaviors as a way to cope with the stress associated with grief and loss.

How To Help: High School Youth

- Allow for regression and dependency
- Encourage expression of feelings such as sorrow, anger, guilt, and regret
- Understand and allow for variation in maturity level
- Answer questions honestly and provide factual information
- Model appropriate responses
- Avoid power struggles and allow choices
- Help to understand and resolve feelings of helplessness
- Assist with plans for completion of school assignments

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-24: How to Help: High School Youth

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *Extreme emotional ups and downs are a common response for youth grieving at this age and stage.*

Healthy adult role-modeling can be helpful to youth coping with grief and loss, change, and death at this age and stage.

Developmentally appropriate nurturing and consistent structure—even if the youth is resistant—are key components to helping the high school youth feel safe and supported during times of grief, loss, or death.

Coping with Death

- Important qualities for assistance include:
 - Courage to acknowledge the loss
 - Willingness to talk; “Keep the door open”
 - Good listening skills
 - Ability to empathize
 - Offer ongoing care and support
 - Regular, healthy routines and structures
 - Boundaries, limits, and accountability
 - Spiritual perspective/insight

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-25: Coping with Death

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *Children and youth coping with the death of a parent or loved one will experience the grief and loss process intensely throughout all of their stages of development.*

Patience, understanding, and accountability are the keys to providing support to children and youth dealing with these issues.

Persistence and care in attempts to acknowledge and talk about death with children and youth are vital to letting them know they are not alone and that someone cares.

Common Mistakes When Dealing with Death

- Words and actions to avoid
 - Acting as if nothing has happened
 - Suggesting the person has grieved long enough
 - Indicating they should “get over it” and move on
 - Expecting business as usual when it comes to school/work performance
- Please don’t ever say:
 - “It could be worse...”
 - “I know how you feel...”
 - “You’ll be stronger because of this...”

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-26: Common Mistakes When Dealing with Death

Content of this slide adapted from: *Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers* by The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children & Families, Portland, OR, www.dougy.org.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Emphasize key points of discussion as follows.

Say: *Don't be afraid to ask children and youth, "How are you doing?" This is a safe way to open the doors of communication and let them know you care.*

Remember that because grieving is a process, long-term adult support is very beneficial in helping children and youth deal with loss and death in healthy ways.

Count on Grief, Loss, and Death to...

- Increase vulnerability
- Create change
- Stress relationships
- Re-define priorities
- Strengthen compassion
- Increase awareness (physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, spiritually)
- Define past and open new doors to future
- Take time to resolve

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-27: Count on Grief, Loss, and Death to...

Content of this slide adapted from: *Life After Loss: How to Help Others Through the Grieving Process* by Theresa McIntier, Carondelet Management Institute.

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Check for group understanding.

Say: Are there any questions or comments about the materials on this slide?

Brainstorming Strategies to Support Children and Youth



- Academically
- Behaviorally
- Emotionally
- Socially
- Physically
- Spiritually

Ready, Set, Go!



Slide 7-28: Brainstorming Strategies to Support Children and Youth

Content of this slide adapted from: N/A

Materials Needed: N/A

Trainer Tips: N/A

What to Do, What to Say:

- Do:**
- Review slide content with participants.
 - Instructions: Divide into small groups and have each identify a facilitator to support those participating in conversation.
 - Allow 15–20 minutes (minimum) to discuss an area(s) on slide and ways that they can support children and youth. Groups should also pick an age group to focus on. Have a recorder take notes for the group.
 - Upon completion, process general responses to questions with large group.

Say: *What responses did your group have to the questions presented on the slide?*

- Do:**
- Check for group understanding.

Say: *Are there any final comments or questions on this chapter?*