

Concept of Death	<p>Transitioning from the understanding of death as reversible, into beginning to see it as final.</p> <p>Death as punishment for bad behavior, bad thoughts.</p> <p>Fear of own bodily harm and mutilation.</p>
Grief Response	<p>May feel angry or responsible for the death.</p> <p>Desire for details about the death, may become specific with questions.</p> <p>May feel concern with how others are responding and whether they are having the 'right' reaction.</p> <p>Starting to have ability to mourn and understand mourning.</p>
Signs of Distress	<p>Overt signs of grief such as sadness and anger.</p> <p>Physical complaints or concerns with their body.</p> <p>Overactive to avoid thinking about death.</p> <p>Feel ashamed, different from other children.</p> <p>Problems in school, withdraw from friends, acting out.</p> <p>Suicidal thoughts (desire to join the deceased).</p> <p>Role confusion.</p>
How You Can Support	<p>Open, honest explanation of death: "harm was done to part of their body (by trauma, accident or illness) and it caused their body to not be able to work any more - heart couldn't beat, lungs couldn't breathe. They no longer can think, feel pain, eat or play."</p> <p>Avoid euphemisms, e.g. sleep, gone away, lost.</p> <p>Ask open ended questions about their understanding, questions and feelings.</p> <p>Provide opportunity to express range of feelings.</p> <p>Learn skills to cope with anger, provide physical outlets.</p> <p>Reassurance not responsible for death, and reiterate the message they are safe and healthy.</p>