

How will I know when my child needs help?

Children respond to grief differently. They may not always ask for help to tell adults how they are feeling. Many caregivers wonder what behavior is “normal” and what behavior may require professional counseling. Here are some signs that *may* indicate that a child could benefit from professional counseling:

- ☹ Total denial of the reality of death
- ☹ Persistent panic or fear
- ☹ Prolonged physical complaints (headaches, tummy aches) that doctors cannot determine a cause
- ☹ Severe separation anxiety from parent or caregiver
- ☹ Prolonged feelings of guilt or responsibility for the death
- ☹ Chronic feelings of depression and/or apathy
- ☹ Persistent thoughts or statements about their own death (suicidal thoughts)
- ☹ Self harm
- ☹ Chronic hostility, anger, or aggressiveness towards others or animals
- ☹ Prolonged change in typical behavior
- ☹ Dramatic decline in schoolwork
- ☹ Increase or reoccurrence of bedwetting
- ☹ Consistent withdrawal from friends and/or family
- ☹ Dramatic, ongoing changes in sleeping (nightmares) and eating patterns
- ☹ Drug or alcohol abuse
- ☹ Flashbacks of a sudden or violent death



If you observe any of these behaviors and are concerned about your child, contact Hospice Support Care at (540) 361-7071 about how and where to get help.