

RAINBOW CONNECTIONS

ISSUE 9 | COMMUNICATION AND GRIEF

This month we will talk about communication. Communication is the giving and receiving of information between two people. It is the way others know what's important to us – what we want and don't want. We are communicating all the time – even when we don't know it. When we are sad, it shows on our face, and someone who cares for us may notice this and give us the hug we need.



When we are grieving, communication is both very important and more difficult. We need the people around us to be more aware of our special needs. But some of these people may be upset because they are also grieving. They may have a hard time listening the way we'd like them to or they may have less patience with us. IF people are not grieving, they may be afraid of grief, not understand it, or not want to hear about our needs. It is very important for us to learn how to communicate well and also to learn with whom to communicate.

Here are some ideas to help you communicate better:

- Try to understand what you need before you talk. People won't be able to figure out how you feel and what you need if you don't tell them.
- Use "I" words to state what you feel. Say "I feel angry when you...", not, "You make me angry." People listen better if they don't feel they are being criticized.
- Be aware of your timing. Try to pick a time when the person you want to talk to is not busy or upset. This makes it more likely they will listen to you.
- Understand who the people around you are. We usually have different people who can help us in different kinds of ways. Some are good with fixing bicycles but not so good with feelings or hugs. Find the person who will be most interested in listening to your needs. Then you will be less disappointed and more likely to get your needs met.



THE HARDEST THING

“The hardest thing about our loss is....”

~ to be left alone

~ the shock

~ when Victoria said “nothing happened” and when I noticed it really happened

~ it's long and lonely

~ saying goodbye

~ her not being there

~ to understand the changes

“This is what we feel about our losses”

By Monday Kids Loss Group

ACTIVITY IDEA

Memory Book

Draw or write about a time with the person who died when you felt especially close to him or her because of a talk you had.

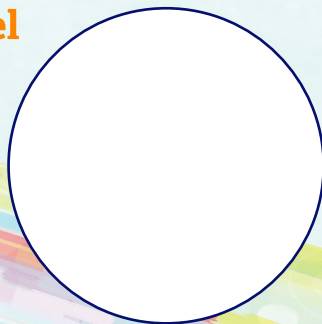
Matching Lists

Make a list of all the people you communicate with. Include family, neighbors, school friends, teachers, teammates. Next make a list of the needs you have. For example, food, warmth, someone to fix things, someone to play outdoor games with, someone to playing indoor games with, someone that's good at listening to sad things, someone that's funny, and so on.

Finally, match as many names as you can from the first list with each need you have listed.

Draw How You Feel

Use a circle to make a face showing how you feel today.



RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Lifetimes: A Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children by Bryan Melloni & Robert Ingpen

Beautiful illustrations of nature with simple writings about beginnings and endings of plants, animals and people.

Annie and The Old One by Miska Miles

A beautifully written Newberry Honor book about a young Navajo girl dealing with the approach of her grandmother's death.

SHARE HOW YOU ARE DOING!

Please call us if you would like to share your experiences with the feelings talked about in Rainbow Connections, or any other problems you might have. Kids are always teaching us about their grief and what helps them.



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