



Common Symptoms of Grief in Children (2-5 Years of Age)

- Stomach aches
- Headaches
- Bed-wetting
- Encopresis (soiling pants accidentally with feces)
- Enuresis (soiling pants accidentally with urine)
- Clinging excessively to others- fearing being left at daycare or school, afraid when parent leaves room, etc.
- Change in appetite- increased or decreased eating habits
- Nightmares or scary dreams
- Irritability
- Tantrums exhibited more often
- Lessened tolerance for frustration
- Anxiety and/or fearfulness
- Afraid to sleep in their room at night
- Regression in behaviors- acting as though they are younger, going back to sucking their thumb, wanting to drink from a sippy cup, “baby talk,” etc.
- Crying frequently
- Switching between emotions quickly
- Belief that the person who died is coming back or is gone only temporarily
- Belief that the death of their loved one is their fault (children may engage in ‘magical thinking’ and believe things like, “If I had behaved better and listened to him, he wouldn’t have died)
- Talking about the person who died at length or not at all
- Talking to the person who died while at play or at other times
- Asking questions frequently about the person who died and/or how they died
- Seeming to switch between understanding that their loved one has died and not understanding that their loved one has died