

DEVELOPMENTAL AGES AND GRIEF REACTIONS

AGE	THINK	FEEL	DO
3 - 5 years (preschool)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *death is temporary and reversible *finality of death is not evident *death mixed up with trips, sleep *may wonder what deceased is doing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Sad *Anxious *Withdrawn *Confused about changes *Angry *Scared *Cranky (feelings acted out in play) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Cry *Fight *Are interested in dead things *Act as if death never happened
6 - 9 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *about the finality of death *about the biological processes of death *death is related to mutilation *a spirit gets you when you die *about who will care for them if a parent dies *their actions and words caused the death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Sad *Anxious *Withdrawn *Confused about changes *Angry *Scared *Cranky (feelings acted out in play) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Behave aggressively *Behave withdrawn *Experience nightmares *Act as if death never happened *Lack concentration *Have a decline in grades
9 - 12 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *about and understand the finality of death *death is hard to talk about *that death may happen again and feel anxious *about death with jocularly *about what will happen if their parent(s) die *their actions and words caused the death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Vulnerable *Anxious *Scared *Lonely *Confused *Angry *Sad *Abandoned *Guilty *Fearful *Worried *Isolated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Behave aggressively *Behave withdrawn *Talk about physical aspects of death *Act like it never happened, not show feelings *Experience nightmares *Lack concentration *Have a decline in grades
12 years and up (teenagers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *about and understand the finality of death *if they show their feelings they will be weak *they need to be in control of their feelings *about death with jocularly *only about life before or after death *their actions and words caused the death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Vulnerable *Anxious *Scared *Lonely *Confused *Angry *Sad *Abandoned *Guilty *Fearful *Worried *Isolated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Behave impulsively *Argue, scream, fight *Allow themselves to be in dangerous situations *Grieve for what might have been *Experience nightmares *Act like it never happened *Lack concentration *Have a decline in grades