

SYLLABUS

NAVIGATING CHILDREN'S GRIEF: ACADEMIC, BEHAVIORAL & EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES

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COURSE CREDIT: Graduate 0.5 credit hour

DATES/TIMES/NUMBER OF MEETINGS: Ongoing self-paced online
course: 14 sections

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Course covers normal grief reactions in children, ages and developmental stages in response to loss, tasks of grief, communicating with bereaved children, academic issues, behavior, complicated bereavement and how to assist within the school environment; high quality multimedia course with audio, video, graphics and text.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Participants will identify normal and complicated responses to childhood bereavement.
2. Participants will demonstrate how personal responses to loss impact their responses to bereaved students.
3. Participants will identify cognitive and emotional responses to loss based on developmental age.
4. Participants will define psychosocial factors that impact grief and mourning.
5. Participants will demonstrate competence in childhood bereavement through passing the final exam with a score of 70%.

TEXTS, READINGS AND INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:

Required resources: Lyles, Mary M. (2004). *Navigating children's grief*. Denver, CO: Children's Grief Education Association. (online course: www.childgrief.org)
Access to computer and a minimum of a 56K modem with online access. Dial up access for this course is significantly slower than broadband. Contact instructor with questions.

Supplemental (recommended) reading:

- Corr, C. A., Nabe, C. M. & Corr, D. (2003). *Death and Dying/Life and Living*. CA: Thomson Wadsworth
- DeSpelder, L. A. & Strickland, A. L. (2002). *The Last Dance*. Boston: McGraw-Hill
- Rando, T. A. (1984). *Grief, Dying, and Death*. IL: Research Press Company
- Ross, E. K. (1997). *On Death and Dying*. NY: Scribner Classics
- Wolfelt, A. D. (1996). *Healing the Bereaved Child*. CO: Companion Press
- Worden, J. W. (1996). *Children and Grief: When a parent dies*. NY: Guilford Press
- Webb, N. B. (2004). *Mass Trauma and Violence: Helping Families and Children Cope*. NY: Guilford Press.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1. Class Participation:** Participants are required to complete the pretest, 14 lessons of the online multimedia presentation of materials and a final exam. Participant's time spent online taking this course is tracked.
- 2. Self-evaluated Assignments:**
 - a. Development of self-care program.
 - b. Self-assessment of losses through completion of timeline (optional: share loss timeline with trusted associate).
 - c. Consider concepts of stages of grief in relation to students you know.
 - d. Write two obituaries for yourself, one now, one 20 years from now.
 - e. Practice reflective listening 15 minutes a day.
 - f. Determine your school's plan for emergencies, such as a terrorist attack, school violence and natural disasters.
- 2. Quizzes:** Multiple choice quizzes (3-5 questions) between didactic lessons.
- 3. Pretest:** Assesses knowledge base prior to taking the course. No grade.
- 4. Final Exam:** Students are required to pass the final exam with a grade of 70% or higher.
- 5. Satisfaction Survey and Suggestions:** Opportunity for feedback regarding the course content and format.

College Credit is Available for Participants with a Bachelor's Degree or higher. Follow instructions in the Course Conclusion to obtain the 0.5 hour of graduate college credit.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION AND SCALE:

Pass/Fail

NAVIGATING CHILDREN'S GRIEF COURSE CONTENT

LESSON 1

- Introduction
- Self-Care

LESSON 2

- Grief Basics
 - Defining Grief and Mourning
 - Grief and Mourning in America
 - Stages of Grief

LESSON 3

- Misconceptions about Children's Grief (true/false quiz with complete answers)

LESSON 4

- Children's Normal Grief Responses
 - Emotional Responses

LESSON 5

- Children's Normal Grief Responses
 - Physical Sensations
 - Thought Patterns
 - Behaviors

LESSON 6

- Circumstances that Impact Mourning
 - Anticipatory Grief
 - Complicated Grief
 - Disenfranchised Grief
 - Traumatic Grief
 - Multiple Deaths
 - Parent Reactions
 - Length of Time to Grieve

LESSON 7

- Self-Awareness
 - Timeline

LESSON 8

- Self-Awareness
 - Obituaries/Life Goals

LESSON 9

Ages and Developmental Reactions

Ages 0-5

Ages 6-10

Ages 11-13

Ages 14-18

LESSON 10

The Tasks of Grief

Learning About the Death

Experiencing the Feelings of Loss

Renewed Energy

LESSON 11

The Impact of Trauma on Learning

Areas of Victimization

Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Academic Difficulties Following Trauma

Support for Traumatized Children

LESSON 12

How to Help Grieving Children

Communication Skills

Reflective Listening

Play

LESSON 13

Death Visits Your School

An Elementary Student is Terminally Ill

When a Terminally Ill Elementary Age Child Dies

When an Elementary Student Dies Accidentally or is Murdered

When an Elementary Teacher or other Staff Member Dies

When a Middle or High School Student Dies

Announcing the Death

Providing Emotional Support

Death Following a Lengthy Illness

Accidental Death or Murder

Accidental Suffocation

Multiple Deaths

Suicide

When a Middle or High School Teacher Dies

Memorials

Terrorism

LESSON 14

Review and preparation for exam

HANDOUTS (PDF FILES AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD)

Children and Adults Grief Bibliography

How to Help Following a Death

Ideas for Coping with Death in Your School or Organization

Coping with the Impact of Terrorism in Your School or Organization

Words That Help/Words That Hurt

Resources