



FUNERAL CHAPEL

Dedicated To Those We Serve

## *Children & Grief*

Children and grieving has always been a tough subject for us as adults to understand. When we love someone, we inevitably set ourselves up for the pain and the grief when we lose that loved one. This can take place through separation, divorce, relocation, falling out of love, or death. Our children are going to experience grief quite frequently in their lives. It's up to us as adults and parents to be able to help them through their grief.

So, in order for us to do that, we must also first know what it is, how to identify it, and how to help. The term "grief" refers to the process of experiencing the psychological, social, and physical reactions to your perception of loss. Psychological ways that children will express grief is through their attitudes, thoughts and expression of feelings, socially through their behavior toward others, and physically through their health and body language.

There are a few things that grieving children need to know; they are not alone, it is okay to ask for help, it is normal to feel afraid, to cry, and to feel lonely, it is okay to want to be a child, it is okay to feel that life is unfair, they can trust the adults around them, grieving is a family affair, and they are loved as much now as before the loss.

Continued...

## Children & Grief Continued...

In today's society, we try to shield our children from the pain of losing someone close to them. Quite often we do not include them in the funeral and even make them stay home. What we must do is include our children, get them to be pallbearers, cross bearers, scripture readers, or even make up some picture boards to display at the funeral. If we can get them to help out and be a part of the funeral service, it may take away the barriers we have built up around death and funerals. Here are a few simple things we must know about the way children handle such sorrow. They grieve for a while, then play for a while, ask questions, then grieve again - all in short spans of time. It is important to realize that crying and asking questions are healthy.

Adults don't have to have all the answers - they can ask for help too. Children need adults to listen when the need is expressed. They also require the security of normal structure, reassurance that they did not cause the death, and they need adult advocates. To see our children grieve is tough. Nobody wants to witness their children cry and in pain. If we express to them how grieving comes from the privilege of being able to love, and allow them to talk, it will help them through that difficult time.

The funeral service is a place for children to gather with family and friends to express their grief and sorrow. We as adults and parents must provide this opportunity to them and set good examples that it is indeed okay to grieve.