



# Helping Your Children to Cope with Bereavement



## How to break the news of the death of a family member?

- In a safe and familiar environment, while keeping your children company, they may be informed by someone with whom they are familiar



## What are the possible grief responses of children?

- Emotional aspect: grief, fear, anxiety, worry, anger, etc.
- Physiological aspect: change in appetite or sleep pattern, having nightmares etc.
- Cognitive aspect: difficult to concentrate, denial, confusion etc.
- Behavioural aspect: crying, silence, social withdrawal, lack of motivation, etc.



## How parents can help your children deal with grief?

- Parents should deal with their own emotions first, remain calm, and be patient
- Set aside time to be with your children
- Listen attentively to your children's thoughts and feelings
- Accept your children's feelings without criticism
- Respond to your children with empathy
- Try to answer your children's questions
- Encourage your children to express their emotions in appropriate ways
- Avoid asking your children to suppress their emotions (e.g., "Don't cry!")
- Seek help if your children's grief responses significantly affect their daily lives

