

# OCTOBER: CHILDHOOD GRIEF AND LOSS



The death of an important person is one of the most frequently reported disruptive childhood experiences. Children who experience a major loss may grieve differently than adults. It's important to recognize the signs and symptoms for children who are grieving in ways that may need support from a counselor.

## Look for these signs:

- Self-blame for the loss
- Seeming distracted, forgetful
- Increased anxiety (often related to loss – fear of others dying, friends abandoning them, the future)
- Increased attachment to caregiver(s)
- Avoidance of school
- Physical symptoms (especially stomachache and headache)
- Withdrawal from usual activities
- Behavior issues (aggression, tantrums, defiance)
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Temporary regression in age-appropriate development (bed-wetting, baby talk, etc.)

## Resources

**Spiritual Care Support Ministries** is a faith-based education, training, counseling, and spiritual support to those who are ill, dying, grieving, and experiencing personal loss, and to those who journey with them. All services are free. Go to [scsm.tv](https://scsm.tv) or call **540-349-5814** for in-person or virtual grief counseling.

**The Dougy Center for Grieving Children & Families** provides tip sheets, activities, podcasts, and more for those who are grieving or helping someone with loss. The section for younger children includes worksheets and activities to help them understand and process their grief. Go to [Dougy.org](https://Dougy.org).

## Did you know?

### From January 2020 to February 2022:

- 200,000+ children younger than 18 lost a caregiver
- 91,000 lost a parent
- 15,000 lost their only in-home caregiver

### Of these children:

- 143,000+ were age 13 or younger
- 100,000+ were between ages 5 and 13
- 41,000+ were between infancy and age 4

Source: *Hidden Pain: Children Who Lost a Parent or Caretaker to COVID-19 and What the Nation Can Do to Help Them*

## Lunch & Learn:

### Addressing Childhood Grief and Loss

Led by Liz Danielson, founder and Executive Director of Spiritual Care Support Ministries

**October 12th**  
**12:00 to 1:00 pm**

