
Preface

School is often the stage upon which both the triumphs and tragedies of children's lives are played out. Within this microcosm, much more than teaching and learning is taking place because at any given time in any given school, kids are grieving. Perhaps a pet has died or parents are divorcing; a student may be bullied or a classmate may have committed suicide. Whatever life event a child is experiencing will more than likely unfold on this stage.

As a professor of educational psychology, I have the privilege of teaching current and future educators and counseling and school psychologists who routinely request information about a variety of grief and loss issues. Their genuine interest in and concern for the well-being of children and teens prompted me to write this book.

The scope of information on grief and loss is extensive, and to the uninitiated, the vast body of literature available can be both confusing and overwhelming. This book serves as a primer of sorts, introducing relevant concepts in a concise, user-friendly format. Classic theories are linked with current perspectives to provide a rich source of information that captures the dynamic nature of children and teens and their grief and loss experiences.

This "hybrid" book—part text, part resource, part workbook—designed for you, the reader, addresses the grief and loss experiences of children and adolescents and provides you with readily available information, materials, and tools specific to your needs. For example, chapter titles are posed as questions because, typically, when someone reaches for a textbook, it's to find an answer to a question. This format will enable you to go directly to the chapter that addresses your concern. Each chapter opens with a relevant and thought-provoking quote that segues to the chapter content. Every chapter contains a variety of tools such as charts, checklists, tables, and activities and includes an invitation to share experiences. Terminology

specific to grief and loss is introduced in boldface type and included in a glossary. Chapters conclude with a reflection and list of key terms.

Counseling and school psychologists are typically the first ones educators and staff consult when any type of crisis arises at school. As such, they often assume a leadership role in the training of other school personnel. This book serves as

- an introduction to grief and loss concepts and terminology,
- a primer for those who have had limited training in grief and loss issues,
- a refresher for more experienced school professionals, and
- a convenient resource and reference tool.

This book will also benefit any school professional wishing to assist grieving children and teens and to gain a better understanding of the many dimensions of grief and loss.

It's important to note that this book is designed to inform and guide the school professional and is not intended to replace professional counseling, should it be needed.