



A HANDBOOK FOR SUPPORTERS

Extending Compassion & Care to Grieving Youth



An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: SUPPORTING GRIEVING YOUTH	1
GRIEF GLOSSARY	1
COMMON GRIEF REACTIONS	2
THE BILL OF RIGHTS OF GRIEVING TEENS	4
TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH YOUTH ABOUT DYING, DEATH & GRIEF	5
GROWING & GRIEVING: THE IMPACT OF ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT	6
MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DYING & GRIEF	10
SUPPORTING YOUTH EXPERIENCING A DEATH THROUGH MAID	12
THE TOP TEN: HOW TO BE HELPFUL, NOT HARMFUL	14
CULTURAL COMPETENCY	16
A SUPPORTER SHOULD...	18
SUPPORTING YOUTH WITH COMPLEX NEEDS	20
SECTION 2: PLANNING YOUR APPROACH	24
STRUCTURE: A SOURCE OF SAFETY AND STABILIZATION	24
IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES	28
CREATIVE MODALITIES	29
WHAT SHOULD I KEEP IN MY TOOLBOX	31
OTHER USEFUL TOOLS	32
SECTION 3: ACTIVITIES FOR GRIEVING YOUTH	33
ACTIVITY CHART	33
IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER	34
ACTIVITY GUIDES	35
APPENDIX A: RESOURCES FOR ADULT SUPPORTERS	108
PODCASTS & VIDEOS	108
INFORMATION SHEETS	109
HELPFUL WEBSITES FOR SUPPORTERS	110
CYGN MEMBER LINKS	110
CONTRIBUTOR LINKS	110
CURRICULA & ACTIVITY GUIDES	111
APPENDIX B: RESOURCES FOR GRIEVING YOUTH	111
JOURNAL & ACTIVITY BOOKS	111
BOOKS FOR GRIEVING YOUTH	112
MINDFULNESS & SELF-COMPASSION	112
HELPFUL WEBSITES FOR YOUTH	112
REFERENCES	113



SECTION 3: ACTIVITIES FOR GRIEVING YOUTH

The activities in this handbook have been categorized by **key themes** that have been ordered in a way that supports the development of programs that cultivate safety, promote self-expression, build healthy coping skills and provide a positive termination experience as youth transition out of the program.

⚠ Use your discretion when selecting and adapting activities in order to best meet the unique needs of the grieving youth you are working with.

CREATING SAFETY		
Comfort Guidelines	p. 35	★
Here-and-Now Stone	p. 37	
I Didn't Know That!	p. 39	**
Coloured Candy Go Around	p. 41	**
Be The Tree	p. 43	
Gong Meditation	p. 45	

TALKING ABOUT DYING, DEATH & GRIEF		
Mourning Through Soccer	p. 47	**
Questions Jar	p. 50	**
Timeline	p. 52	
Mourning Online	p. 54	
My Ecomap	p. 57	
Comfort Card	p. 59	

IDENTIFYING & EXPRESSING EMOTIONS		
Blackout Poem	p. 61	
Drumming Through Grief	p. 63	
Grief Stack	p. 65	
Grief Gallery	p. 67	**
Picking Up The Pieces	p. 69	
Listening to our Bodies	p. 72	

COPING WITH THE TOUGH STUFF		
Self-Care Spinner	p. 75	
Say Whaaat?!	p. 78	
Grief Trivia	p. 81	**
Coping Toolbox	p. 83	
Balancing Grief	p. 85	
Compassionate Friend	p. 87	
Calming Music Meditation	p. 89	

STAYING CONNECTED		
Memory Calendar	p. 90	
Honour Wall	p. 92	**
Memorial Rocks	p. 94	
HUG	p. 96	Ⓞ
Memory Beads	p. 98	

GROWING THROUGH GRIEF		
Rock Ceremony	p. 100	**
Feel Good Messages	p. 101	
What I Value Most	p. 103	
Weaving Hearts	p. 106	**

★ Critical Activity
 ** Group Activity
 Ⓞ Legacy Project