

SUPPORTING A BEREAVED PARENT

Compassionate guidance for family, friends, and caregivers

The death of a child changes a parent's life forever. Along with grieving the child they love, a parent may mourn missed milestones, changed family relationships, and an entire future they expected to share. Compassionate support does not try to explain or lessen this profound loss. It honors the child, respects the parent's continuing bond, and remains present for the lifelong journey of love and grief.

HONOR THEIR CHILD

Parents often fear that their child will be forgotten. Speaking the child's name can be a meaningful act of remembrance.

- Use their child's name naturally
- Share a memory, photograph, or story
- Remember birthdays and significant dates
- Acknowledge the child's place in the family

LISTEN WITHOUT FIXING

A bereaved parent needs room to speak honestly without being corrected, compared, or rushed toward a positive outlook.

- Listen to the same memories more than once
- Allow tears, anger, silence, and changing emotions
- Avoid explanations, clichés, and comparisons
- Say, "I am here, and I will listen."

OFFER STEADY SUPPORT

Grief can make ordinary responsibilities feel overwhelming. Specific, practical care can reduce the burden of daily life.

- Offer a meal, errand, ride, or household help
- Check in without requiring a response
- Include them while respecting their limits
- Continue reaching out after the early weeks

UNDERSTAND LIFELONG GRIEF

A parent does not stop loving or missing a child. Grief may change over time, but important moments can renew its intensity.

- Do not place a timeline on their healing
- Expect milestones and holidays to be difficult
- Welcome continuing bonds and remembrance
- Support moments of joy without assuming grief has ended

A GENTLE REMINDER

Their child's life matters, their parenthood continues, and their love does not end. Your willingness to remember alongside them can make grief feel less lonely.

You do not need perfect words. Your steady, compassionate presence matters.

