

PARENTING AFTER CHILD LOSS

Holding Love, Grief, and Family Life Together

Parenting | Family | Grief | Connection

Parenting after the death of a child can mean carrying your own grief while caring for surviving children who are grieving, growing, and needing you in their own ways. You may worry more, feel pulled in many directions, or wonder whether you are doing enough. There is no perfect way to parent through this loss. Gentle honesty, consistent love, and making room for each person's feelings can help your family stay connected while you learn to live with what has changed.

You do not have to be a perfect parent to be a loving one in grief.

1 YOUR GRIEF AND THEIRS

- You may be grieving while supporting children who are grieving too.
- Their needs may look different from yours.
- It is okay to let everyone have their own feelings.
- Love can make room for all of it.

2 DIFFERENT AGES, DIFFERENT NEEDS

- Young children, teens, and adults may understand loss differently.
- Questions may return as they grow.
- Simple, honest answers can help them feel safe.
- You do not need to have every answer.

3 TALKING ABOUT THEIR SIBLING

- Use your child's name when it feels right.
- Invite memories, questions, and feelings without pressure.
- Let surviving children know their sibling is still part of the family.
- Listening matters more than getting the words perfect.

4 WHEN YOU FEEL PULLED APART

- You may feel torn between your own pain and their needs.
- Small moments of connection can still be meaningful.
- Ask for help when your energy is low.
- You are carrying a great deal.

5 FEAR AND WORRY

- After loss, ordinary worries may feel much bigger.
- Notice when fear is taking over your days.
- Grounding routines and support can help.
- You do not have to manage every fear alone.

6 KEEPING ROUTINES GENTLE

- Routines can offer children comfort and predictability.
- They do not have to be perfect or the same as before.
- Choose a few small anchors for the day.
- Flexibility is part of caring for your family.

7 MAKING SPACE FOR JOY

- Joy may feel complicated after loss.
- A laugh, a celebration, or a good day does not betray your child.
- Your family is allowed moments of light.
- Love and grief can live side by side.

8 CARING FOR YOURSELF TOO

- Your children benefit when you receive support, too.
- Rest, counseling, grief groups, and trusted people can help.
- Taking a break is not abandoning anyone.
- You deserve care as you care for your family.

A GENTLE REMINDER

Gentle honesty, steady love, and support can help a grieving family stay connected.

