

## Common Teen Responses to Grief

People often think of grief as an emotional experience. It is. Grief is also a physical, emotional, behavioral, and spiritual experience. It not only affects how a person feels but also how a person behaves. Here are some common ways teens respond to grief:

<p><b>PHYSICAL RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deep sighing</li> <li>Weakness and fatigue</li> <li>Rapid heartbeat</li> <li>Increased blood pressure</li> <li>Increased activity</li> <li>Decreased activity</li> <li>Muscular tension</li> <li>Sleep disturbance</li> <li>Decreased resistance to illness</li> <li>Change in weight and appetite</li> <li>Neglect of self</li> <li>Increased sensory awareness</li> <li>Increase in self-care</li> </ul>	<p><b>BEHAVIORIAL RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Searching for what was lost</li> <li>Detaching from surroundings</li> <li>Disoriented to time and place</li> <li>Withdrawn from friends and activities</li> <li>Unable to concentrate</li> <li>Forgetful</li> <li>Blameful of others</li> <li>Apathetic regarding activities or the future</li> <li>Preoccupied</li> <li>Crying</li> <li>Seeking solitude</li> <li>Finishing “unfinished business”</li> <li>Seeking and providing forgiveness</li> <li>Spontaneity</li> </ul>	<p><b>SPIRITUAL RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Searching for what was lost</li> <li>Loss of faith</li> <li>Renewal of faith</li> <li>Feeling punished for some wrong</li> <li>Anger at God</li> <li>Helplessness</li> <li>Confusion</li> <li>Comforted by spiritual beliefs</li> <li>Hopelessness</li> <li>Insecurity</li> </ul>
<p><b>EMOTIONAL RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numbness</li> <li>Confusion</li> <li>Sadness</li> <li>Guilt</li> <li>Euphoria</li> <li>Yearning</li> <li>Despair</li> <li>Hopelessness</li> <li>Helplessness</li> <li>Feeling of being lost</li> <li>Anger</li> <li>Bitterness/Vengefulness</li> <li>Peacefulness</li> <li>Spiritual Connectedness</li> </ul>	<p><b>SOCIAL RESPONSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acting or trying to be like the person who died</li> <li>Missing school a lot</li> <li>Not wanting to leave home</li> <li>Taking care of other people too much</li> <li>Inability to talk about death</li> <li>Acting older than other kids in age group</li> <li>Stealing things from others</li> <li>Fighting with friends or other family members</li> <li>Doing thing that are high risk and could be dangerous</li> <li>Feeling different from peers</li> </ul>	<p><b>WARNING SIGNS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Destructive behavior</li> <li>Compulsive caregiving</li> <li>Taking on too much responsibility</li> <li>A sustained drop in school performance</li> <li>Independence beyond one’s years</li> <li>Stealing</li> <li>Depression</li> <li>Substance abuse</li> <li>Early sexual activity or promiscuity</li> <li>Getting stuck at an early developmental age</li> <li>Difficulty in relationships</li> <li>School phobia</li> <li>Increased fighting and aggression</li> <li>Eating disorders</li> <li>High risk taking</li> <li>Inability to talk about the loss of the person who died</li> <li>Over-identification with the death of the person who died</li> </ul>