Dear Caregiver:

In this kit you will find many items that will help and support you. We suggest that you review all of the contents and books before sharing them with the children. We have included activity ideas that may be related to a particular story, however please use the items as you choose. When working with children, one question or discussion may lead to many others and you will find that you will use all of the items in the kit or just a few. The resources and activity pages are for your use and to share with parents and children. Please keep the originals in the book and make copies.

Some of the items are intended to be used by the children and not be returned. Please use what you need and leave the extras for others. This includes the picture collage frames, paper, wiggly eyes, chalk, play dough and pom pom balls. Please use caution when using small parts with children, as some items may not be suitable for children under age 2.

These materials and resources are not intended to be a substitute for professional support services. We do not endorse or support any one belief or grief process. There are many more resources and activities available to you and for children and we encourage you to seek them out. Please consider sharing new resources and activities with us so that we may add them to the kit.

Comforting thoughts,

Fresno County EOC
Head Start- Preschool
Mental Health Staff

For more information please contact:

Doreen Fischer
Mental Health Coordinator
FCEOC Head Start- Preschool
1920 Mariposa Mall Ste. 200
Fresno, CA 93721

559-263-1169
Fax- 559-263-1287

*These kits are available for check out from the Mental Health Resources Library.
CHILDREN’S GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT KIT

CONTENTS

Materials/Supplies

Animal puppets - use when a pet dies or with related books, *Goodbye Mousie*, *The Tenth Good Thing About Barney*, dramatic play or group time, one-on-one time

Sticky foam picture frames - create a frame to hold a photo or hand drawn picture of a loved one, family, friend or pet

Wiggly eyes - Create animals to be used with death of a pet or pocket snugglies, or on the foam picture frames to remember someone

Pom Poms - Create animals to be used with death of a pet or make a pocket soft snugglie to help when feeling sad

Ribbon

Paper/Crayons/Chalk - draw pictures, write letters, stories, about feelings etc

Playdough

“Heart warmer” dolls - cuddly lavender scented dolls that can be warmed in the microwave (3 min.) Especially helpful for all those grieving when arms ache to hold on.

Spinoza Bear - the Bear Who Speaks from the Heart, is an effective therapeutic tool used by healthcare professionals across the country. More than just a quality teddy bear, Spinoza provides sensory stimulation, companionship, hope and happiness through specialized CD's played in a high quality player and speaker hidden deep in his fur.

BOOKS

ACTIVITY BASED BOOKS:

*Healing Activities for Children in Grief* by Gay McWhorter M.Ed
Activities and book lists suitable for support group and grieving children, preteens and teens

*How I Feel* by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D
A coloring book for grieving children

*Just For You* (Ryan’s Heart: [www.ryansheartpo.org](http://www.ryansheartpo.org))
Healing activities for grieving children and teens

*Something Scary Happened To Me* by Linda Rieger, ph.D
Workbook for children (also available in Spanish)
CHILDREN’S GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT KIT

GRIEF AND EXPLAINING DEATH:

**Tear Soup** Illustrator Taylor Bills, Co-authors Chuck DeKlyen & Pat Schwiebert
A recipe for healing after loss is a family story book that centers around an old and somewhat wise woman, Grandy. Grandy has just suffered a big loss in her life and so she is headed to the kitchen to make a special batch of *Tear Soup.* (DVD is also included)

**I Miss You** a first look at Death by Pat Thomas
Reassuring picture book explores the difficult issue of death for young children children's feelings and questions about this sensitive are looked at in a simple but realistic way. This book helps them to understand their loss and to come to terms with their feelings.

**The Next Place** by Warren Hanson
An inspirational journey of light and hope where earthly hurts are left behind. Beautifully poetic and heart warming illustrations.

**What's Heaven?** By Maria Shriver illustrated by Sandra Speidel
Calming story of a Kate a little girl whose great grandma has just died. She seeks answers and her mother helps her learn about heaven.

**When Dinosaurs Die: A guide to Understanding Death** by Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown
Question and answer book about death honestly told with delightful illustrations.

**What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies** by Trevor Romain
This little book, full of concrete advice and expressive illustrations, offers the comfort and reassurance that children need during these difficult times. Written to and for kids, it’s also recommended for parents and other relatives, educators, counselors, and youth workers.

NATURE EXPLAINING DEATH:

**Lifetimes: the beautiful way to explain death to children** by Bryan Mellonie and Robert Ingpen
*Lifetimes* is a moving book for all ages. It lets us explain life and death in a sensitive caring and beautiful way. It tells about beginning and ending and about life in between. It talks about plants, animals and people having their own special lifetimes.

**The Fall of Freddie the Leaf** by Leo Buscaglia Ph.D
The Fall of Freddie the Leaf touches children and adults alike, illustrating the delicate balance between life and death. It is a warm thought-provoking story about how Freddie ad his companion leaves change with the passing season and the coming winter.

**Gentle Willow A Story For Children About Dying** by Joyce C Mills Ph.D
Written for children who may not survive their illness or for the children who know them, this tender and touching tale helps address feelings of disbelief, anger, and sadness, along with love and compassion.

TRAUMA:

**When Bad Things Happen A Guide To Help Kids Cope** by Ted O’Neal
This book helps parents deal with their children's fears and sadness, showing adults how to restore a child's trust that life, after all, is good.
CHILDREN’S GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT KIT

PETS/ANIMALS:

**The Tenth Good Thing About Barney** by Judith Viorst, Illustrated by Erik Blegvad
Barney the beloved cat dies and the small boy begins to understand his feelings, grief, and remembering ten good things about Barney.

**Goodbye Mousie** by Robie H. Harris
One morning a boy finds that his pet, Mousie, won’t wake up. The truth is Mousie has died. At first the boy doesn't believe it. He gets very mad at Mousie for dying, and then he feels very sad. But talking about Mousie, burying Mousie in a special box, and saying good-bye helps this boy begin to feel better about the loss of his beloved pet.

**Bear's Last Journey** by Udo Weigelt
Old Bear is very sick. With his animal friends gathered around him, Bear tells them that he must say good-bye, for he is going on a special journey. "But ... but ... you're not dying?" asks Rabbit, and Bear admits that he is. All the animals are saddened by the news, but the little fox is especially upset—hurt and angry and confused. He cannot imagine life without Bear. How Fox and the other forest animals deal with the loss of their friend is a moving story about death, grieving, and the solace to be found in memory.

CD/DVD’s

**When Families Grieve** by New York Life Foundation ([www.newyorklife.com](http://www.newyorklife.com))
Grief kit from Sesame Workshop, featuring Elmo. Kit includes a Sesame Street DVD, Guide for parents and caregivers and a children's story. (English and Spanish)

**Tear Soup DVD**
A recipe for healing after loss centers around an old and somewhat wise woman, Grandy. Grandy has just suffered a big loss in her life and so she is headed to the kitchen to make a special batch of *Tear Soup*

**The Spinoza Collection CD – The Stories and songs of Spinoza**