



HOSPICE *of* LENAWEE

Kaleidoscope

Handling the Holidays

The holidays are traditionally a time of happiness and joining together with friends and family, but when someone special dies in our life, the spirit of the season may appear less bright. The anticipation leading up to the season can also be intense. The following are tips to help grieving children through the holidays.

1. PLAN AHEAD
Anxiety leading up to the season can be more intense than the actual holiday. Planning ahead can help lower anxiety especially for children. Once you've decided what you can and cannot do, share your decisions with your family.
2. ACCEPT LIMITATIONS
You may not be able to accommodate all that goes along with the holiday season. Consider scaling back or changing things you may have done in the past. Think about what might be enjoyable or most meaningful for you and your family.
3. ACKNOWLEDGE DIFFERENT FEELINGS AND PREFERENCES
Involve the whole family in discussing what they would like to do. You may decide to keep everything the same or change everything or fall somewhere in between.
4. BE INFORMED
Find out about the events you are attending; who will be there, how long it's expected to last, and if you need to do anything to prepare for it. Sometimes it is helpful to brainstorm ways to respond to questions or offers of help from others.
5. IT MAY BE HARD, BUT ASK FOR HELP
Allow people to help in ways such as cleaning, cooking, baking, shopping, transportation, childcare, running errands, and caring for pets. Sometimes we worry about burdening others, but more times than not, they are happy to assist.
6. FIND TIME FOR THE BASICS
The holidays can be physically and emotionally draining, especially if you're grieving. Encourage rest, play, and plan for healthy eating and hydration for the whole family.

Ways to remember and honor the person who died

- Write a card or letter to the person who died
- Light a memorial candle and share memories
- Write memories on strips of paper and make a paper chain
- Hang a special decoration in memory of the person, such as an ornament or stocking. If a stocking is used, family members can place cards or pieces of paper with memories.
- Share one of the person's favorite foods or meals and distribute the recipe for close friends and family as a gift
- Buy a special gift for your loved one and donate it to charity