

# "TEENAGE GRIEF"

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1. **Plan words to say:** "Pay attention to me. Don't forget me. I am still here. Talk to me. I am grieving too." Teens do not always know how to say these words. Teens, speak up! Remind your parents to check in with you and ask, "How are you holding up?"
2. **Talk to counselors:** Talk to school counselors about your grief, your pain and your studies. Make a plan of action in case grades start to fail or emotions get out of control. Choose someone to call and find a safe place to go when emotions break down in the classroom. Find other counselors when you are not in school such as a professional therapist, rabbi, priest, minister or religious leader.
3. **Find a Support Group:** Find a grief support group in your town and/or school. Ask your school counselor if your town has one. If none exist, think about starting your own group or looking for a group online. You are not the only teen grieving. Find out how others manage or share your experiences with others.
4. **Get A Therapist:** Having a therapist means you have an adult who will listen to you who isn't in the middle of his or her own grief. A therapist can help with problems that arise in your family, at school or with friends.
5. **Go to Summer Camp:** Go to a camp just for grieving teens. Check the internet for local grief camps for teenagers. Find out you are not alone. Get support and maybe even laugh!
6. **Watch for Depression:** Being sad is the result of grieving. Being depressed is a chemical change in your brain that needs a doctor's care. If you are crying much of the day, thinking about suicide, and seem like you can't get out of bed, please see a doctor immediately. If you are suicidal, call 911 or go to the emergency room as soon as possible. Don't simply think these feelings will pass if you wait long enough!
7. **Write A Story:** Write a story about the person you have lost. Put in the story your emotions and feelings. This is your story. Share the story with others only if you want to! Some of the most creative literature in the world has been written because of the author's loss experience.
8. **Journal:** Putting your feelings, thoughts, worries and fears on paper may make them easier to handle than keeping all of them in your head. Pick out a journal that means something to you or keep a journal online. Journaling is secret, safe and all yours. It really helps to see what you are thinking.
9. **Talk To Friends and Family:** Tell your friends and family what your needs and wants are when you are grieving. They will not know how to help you or relate to you unless you are specific. Ask for help. Then congratulate yourself when you do.
10. **Keep Physically Active:** Remember your body. Exercise will help you feel better and make the grief more manageable, especially when you are angry. Walk, ride your bike, go to the gym, or play your favorite sport. The important thing is to exercise at least once a day. Find an exercise buddy. This helps you keep at it.
11. **Lean on your faith:** Remember to touch base with your source of spirituality. It will bring comfort, strength and internal wisdom. If you don't have a spiritual belief system, now is the perfect time to search for one. Grief can be a catalyst for personal growth. Use this time to discover new things about yourself and the universe.