



Preparing for a Funeral

When preparing children for a funeral, be as simple and age specific as possible. Children benefit from having an understanding of what they can expect.

Identify the purpose of a funeral

- ♥ An opportunity for everyone to be together and say goodbye

Prepare them for the viewing

- ♥ Explain their loved one's body will be visible for those who would like to see them for the last time
- ♥ Describe that the body no longer works
 - The body does not feel anything but can still be touched, if desired
 - Explain what the body will look and feel like
- ♥ Give your child the choice to see and/or touch their loved one

Prepare them for the service

- ♥ Identify where it will be, when it will happen, what will happen, and who will be present
- ♥ Use the 5 senses to describe the service
 - Remind them that this is what you think will happen but things may change
 - See- What the room looks like, who will be present, reactions from others (crying), etc.
 - Hear- Crying, talking, music playing, prayers, etc.

Create a child-friendly environment at the funeral (as appropriate)

- ♥ Offer them the opportunity to do something special for their loved one at the service or take something that reminds them of their loved one
 - For example: taking/drawing pictures, reading a poem, playing a song, etc.
- ♥ Bring activities for children to help provide comfort
 - For example: paper/crayons for drawing pictures of memories or bubbles to make wishes/send messages

While at the funeral

- ♥ Identify a point person ahead of time for your child to be with in case your child needs to leave the service
 - Children have shorter attention spans and will have energy that needs to be released. Have your child and the point person identify a signal that identifies their need to leave the room (example- squeezing their hand).

Please note, when explaining anything about death

- ♥ 3-8 year olds understand 70-90% concrete language and 10-30% abstract language (spiritual, religious explanations)



Treasure Coast Hospice
A TREASURE HEALTH SERVICE

Community Sponsors:



Learn more about Treasure Coast Hospice Grief Support

772-403-4530 | griefinfo@treasurehealth.org | www.TreasureHealth.org