

Explaining Death To Children

In today's busy world, parents have little time to explain the nature of life to their children. Many times, parents leave it up to the media to teach their children everything they need to know. No subject is as emotionally trying on a small child than the death of a pet or loved one. The best thing you can do for your child is to explain death in a way that your child can understand and also in a way that won't make them uncomfortable.

1. Death As A Natural Cycle

Don't avoid talking about death with your children, nor should you explain it in such a way that would instill a fear of death. Thankfully for parents, it is not likely that your child will have to deal with a family member dying, but about forty percent of children do lose a pet at one time or another.

2. Your Explanation Counts

Explaining an idea such as death is different from explaining something physical that your children are able to see, taste or touch. Try and explain things from the simplest level you can. Death is one of many cycles in life, and as such, don't be afraid to widen your discussion to other things like talking about babies and the cycle of life.

3. Tips For Helping Children Cope With Loss

- It is difficult for children to understand death is permanent
- No matter how small your child's pet be sure to give a proper funeral
- Don't mislead children about death
- Death is not something to be feared

Most importantly it is critical that you keep talking to your child. Keep the lines of communication open by asking them how they are feeling. Sometimes children will have nightmares about death or losing someone and it's important to talk through these dreams. Some children try to hide their confusion and sadness, and it's important to see beyond the surface and get them to open up to you. Just because they are children does not mean that they don't feel things deeply. If a child keeps their pain and confusion bottled up, it will come back to haunt them in later years.

4. Educate Children As Early As Possible

It is good to give your children as much understanding about the world around them as you can. This way, when tragedy does strike they are better able to cope. Many parents agree that children respond best to an open discussion rather than, say, an informational video.

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About the Author

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