Grieving Children, Adolescents, and Their Families

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Grief and Loss

Grief: The internal feelings that occur when one faces a major loss

Major losses include:

- Death of a loved one
- Breakup of a relationship
- Job loss
- Loss of a living situation
- Loss of health
Grief and Loss

Stages of the Grief Cycle

"NORMAL" FUNCTIONING

Shock and Denial
- Avoidance
- Confusion
- Fear
- Numbness
- Blame

Anger
- Frustration
- Anxiety
- Irritation
- Embarrassment
- Shame

Depression and Detachment
- Overwhelmed
- Blahs
- Lack of energy
- Helplessness

RETURN TO MEANINGFUL LIFE

Acceptance
- Exploring options
- A new plan in place

Dialogue and Bargaining
- Reaching out to others
- Desire to tell one's story
- Struggle to find meaning for what has happened
Features of Grief in Children

- Avoidance of conversation
- Less interested in regular activities
- Loss of sleep
- More irritable
- Decreased concentration
- Easily Startled
- Decline in academic performance
- Difficulty relating to peers/making friends
- Everyday tasks may be more difficult
- Generalized sadness
How to Help

- Face-to-face support
  - Parents/Guardians
  - Child
- Group Therapies
- Play Therapies
- Music Therapies
- Referring
  - Social Workers
  - Psychologists
How to Help

- Few measurements
  - The GCQ-C and the IPG-C

- There needs to be more research to assess the nuances of children and adolescent grieving.

- This topic is often avoided with children
  - Misconception that they do not grieve
  - Uncomfortable
  - Grieving themselves
The Awesome Adventures of Captain Spirit
THE AWESOME ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN SPIRIT

VS.

MANTROID
Discussion

Who was the villian?

Was this play?

Do you think this could be an effective tool?
Wrap Up

- Grief counseling for children is important
- Must utilize all options that are currently available (even unconventional)
- Would greatly benefit from future research
Sources


Sources

