



## Helping Bereaved Children: A Handbook for Practitioners

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From the editor of the widely acclaimed *Play Therapy with Children in Crisis*, this new volume explores a related and still neglected area/m-/childhood bereavement. Drawing on the clinical experiences of mental health professionals who work with bereaved children, this handbook presents not only the theoretical principles that guide interventions, but also detailed descriptions of the helping process.

The book brings to life a variety of counseling techniques and therapeutic interventions for helping children who have suffered a loss. Full-length clinical examples illustrate an array of treatment strategies for working with children at various developmental stages and with different kinds of bereavement. Solidly grounded in developmental psychology, the book presents a range of intervention approaches from counseling to therapy. A unique, two-column format provides the reader with not only the content of the sessions, but also the practitioner's accompanying thoughts and rationale for intervention.

Part I presents a theoretical framework that offers insight into the child's view of death, and guidance for assessment and treatment. A number of sample forms are provided for recording significant information about the child's background, the situation surrounding the death, and the child's potential support systems--family, community, and religious. Part II focuses on children's reactions to the death of family members. A wide range of situations are examined, from the anticipated, timely death of a grandparent to the traumatic murder-suicide of both parents. A variety of treatment modalities are presented, including family therapy, individual play therapy, and group bereavement counseling.

The third part covers deaths that affect communities of children, such as the death of a neighborhood friend, classmate, or teacher. Because children's ages and personal histories affect their responses to death, the book demonstrates the need for multilevel interventions in certain circumstances, and shows how treatment can be tailored to meet individual needs. Of special interest is the book's uniquely practical Appendix, which includes a list of suppliers of play therapy materials, sources for books on bereavement, and references about different religious, cultural, and ethnic practices related to death.

*Helping Bereaved Children* is must reading for psychologists, psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, and counselors who work with children and their families. Immensely practical and theoretically sound, this book will be an important reference tool for practitioners who wish to enhance their skills in play therapy, grief counseling, and crisis trauma counseling.

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