Grief, Loss and Substance Abuse:
References and Resources, with abstracts
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Books and Book Chapters

Atwood, Joan (2001). Family Systems/Family Therapy Applications for Clinical Practice, in *The Implications of Female Risk Factors for Substance Abuse Prevention.* New York: Routledge; p 29-53.

Description: Trends in substance abuse prevention have not adequately addressed the needs of girls and female adolescents. The precursors to substance use and abuse in adolescence are analyzed specifically from a gender-specific perspective. Female drug use as both a maladaptive and adaptive pattern of coping behavior is examined within a socio-cultural context. This new understanding points to the need for alternative models of prevention with particular attention to risk, resiliency and protective factors. The expanded role of the family therapist as "Family Life Cycle Specialist" within a prevention model will be highlighted.

Doka, KJ, (2000). *Living With Grief: Children, Adolescents, and Loss.* Psychology Press.

Description: This book features articles by leading educators and clinicians in the field of grief and bereavement. The chapters entitled "Voices" are the writings of children and adolescents. The book includes a comprehensive resource list of national organizations and a useful bibliography of age-appropriate literature for children and adolescents.

Fitzgerald, H (2000). *The Grieving Teen: A Guide for Teenagers and Their Friends.* Simon and Schuster.

Description: Although the circumstances surrounding a death are difficult to handle at any age, adolescence brings with it challenges and struggles that until now have been largely overlooked. But in this unique and compassionate guide, renowned grief counselor Helen Fitzgerald turns her attention to the special needs of adolescents struggling with loss and gives them the tools they need to work through their pain and grief.

Gootman, M (2009). *When a Friend Dies: A Book for Teens About Grieving and Healing.* Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing.

Description: *When a Friend Dies: A Book for Teens About Grieving & Healing....* If you are grieving the death of a friend, do something for yourself. Take the time to read this book. It isn't very long - there aren't a lot of words - but you may find the help you need to cope with your sadness and begin to heal. Author Marilyn Gootman has seen her own children suffer from the death of a friend, and she knows what teenagers go through when another teen dies. Let her genuine understanding, gentle advice, and compassionate wisdom guide you through the next few days, weeks, or months. If you're a parent or teacher of a teen who has experienced a painful loss, this book is for you, too.

Myers, E & Adams, K (2004). *When will I stop hurting?: Teens, Loss, and Grief The Ultimate Teen Guide.* Scarecrow Press, Inc.

Description: This is a self-help guide for teenagers who are struggling with bereavement and the emotional difficulties it presents. This book provides an overview of grief as a painful but normal process, and it offers insights from bereavement experts as well as practical suggestions for coping with loss, including accounts from teens. This book closes a gap in the available literature on grief and bereavement that has tended to focus on adults and younger children. It provides a warm, accessible resource that will reassure teen readers about the normality of grief, encourage their understanding of what happens during the grief process, and provides resources to help teens cope with their experiences of loss. The author accomplishes these goals by explaining the psychology of grief, by providing psychologists' comments and advice on dealing with bereavement, and by offering teens' insights into their own experiences.

Perschy, MK, (2004). *Helping Teens Work Through Grief.* New York: Routledge.

Description: The second edition of Helping Teens Work Through Grief provides a more complete and updated manual for facilitators of teen grief groups. It includes additional background information about developmental aspects of teens, the process of grief, aspects of trauma and its effects on teens.

Smyth, N (2004). Social Support and Loss During Adolescence: How Different Are Teen Girls from Boys?, in *Women and Girls in the Social Environmental Behavioral Perspectives.* New York: Routledge; p 5-20.

Description: This article describes perceived differences in social support between adolescent boys and girls who have experienced the death of a friend or relative int eh last year The article also evaluates the relative contribution of five sources of social support on adolescent girls' and boys' reports of their self-esteem, depressive symptoms, and disruptive school behavior. Boys and girls do report different levels of social support from

different source. However, the results suggest that the sources of support needed to maintain mental health and school functioning in the face of a loss is the same for boys and girls.

Curricula, Handouts, and Tools

Curriculum

Grief Education for Preteens

VK Howard Death is a difficult topic to discuss for most everyone regardless of age. It is especially difficult to discuss with young children or adolescents. Most of us have a difficult time dealing with the death of someone very close to us. Children may have an especially hard time dealing with the loss of a parent, sibling, or grandparent. In these perilous times in which we live, a child may even have to deal with the sudden and sometimes tragic death of a playmate or classmate. When children or adolescents lose someone who has been a part of their lives and activities, the normal and predictable response to loss is grief. The concern is not whether the youth will grieve, but whether his or her grief will be healthy and functional or pathological and dysfunctional (Parkes, 1990). This curriculum unit was written to help children ages 9 to 12 understand and cope with the loss of a loved one. http://hti.math.uh.edu/curriculum/units/2005/05/05.05.04.pdf.

Toolkit

Hospice's "Grief at School". http://www.americanhospice.org/grief-at-school-mainmenu-34

Excerpt: Welcome to Grief at School In this corner of our website, you will find materials to help address children's grief, including articles, tools, resources such as guidelines for running a grief support group for teens, fact sheets and more. We invite you to click on a menu item at left to begin browsing through our materials.

Guidebook

Helping Your Teen Cope with Traumatic Stress and Substance Abuse Established by Congress in 2000, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) is a unique collaboration of academic and community-based service centers whose mission is to raise the standard of care and increase access to services for traumatized children and their families across the United States. Combining knowledge of child development, expertise in the full range of child traumatic experiences, and attention to cultural perspectives, the NCTSN serves as a national resource for developing and disseminating evidence-based interventions, trauma-informed services, and public and professional education. http://www.nctsnet.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/teen_coping_substance_abuse.pdf

Handbook
Caring for Children in Foster Care, Chapter 3.

Excerpt from page 16: This section discusses the different ways and stages that children process grief and loss. All children in foster care experience significant loss and grief when they are separated from their families, and some of the children in foster care have experienced even more loss prior to being placed in foster care. This section has suggestions for helping children work through their struggles of grief and loss.
http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/publications/pdf/dcf_p_5000_chapter3.pdf

Guidebook
Teens and Grief: A Guide for Parents
http://www.selfgrowth.com/articles/teens_and_grief_a_guide_for_parents

Excerpt: Adolescence is one of the most difficult and chaotic stages in life, and is widely recognized as a particularly difficult time for dealing with the death of a parent or other loved one. According to renowned developmental psychiatrist Erik Erikson, the task of adolescence is to begin to find one's unique identity, and if this task is not accomplished, it can result in what Erikson calls "role confusion" or the "identity crisis." Other important developmental tasks in the teen years are finding a sense of belonging and peer acceptance, withdrawing emotionally from parents and achieving emotional independence.

Powerpoint Presentations

Conference Powerpoint/Lecture
O Connor, M. (Sept 24-26, 2008). Building better childhoods: Grief matters, responding to loss and bereavement.
Presented at: "Get it right for every child" Childrens Services Conference; Glasgow Sept 24-26, 2008.
http://www.slideshare.net/IRISSslides/grief-matters-responding-to-loss-and-bereavement-mike-oconnor-presentation

Cites statistics from: Ribben-mccarthy, J. 2007- NCB highlight #232

Team Training Presentation
Shannon, Dr. Bonnie B. (2005). Helping Students Cope with Loss, Death and Grief: "Non-Therapeutic" Intervention for the Classroom. Local District 6 School Site Crisis Team Training; 2-23-05. http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/.../Helping Students Cope with Grief and Loss.ppt

Program Evaluation

Hodson M. A.. Cheri L.; Foster Ph. D., Jessica; Rayyes, M. A.. Nada; Rivera, M. A.. Noelle. (2006) Evaluation of the Impact Program: 2005-06 Report. Los Angeles Unified School District. notebook.lausd.net/pls/ptl/url/.../2AF427C0F39A90A6E0430A00021090A6

Executive Summary: This report presents findings from the evaluation of the Los Angeles Unified School District's IMPACT program during the 2005-06 school year. IMPACT is the District's prevention and early intervention program for middle and high school students who exhibit behaviors related to possible substance use, violence, or other crises and are consequently not performing well in school. The program is designed to provide students with the skills and support necessary to make positive life choices. The goals of the IMPACT program are to improve student achievement and attendance, provide students with coping skills, and develop resiliency. This is accomplished via schoolwide awareness activities and education, as well as curriculum-based instruction for students who need additional support. This report provides findings regarding the characteristics, uniformity, school climate, quality of instruction, curriculum fidelity, and effectiveness of the program.

Scholarly Articles

Adolescent Grief: "It Never Really Hit Me…Until It Actually Happened". In the United States, more than 2 million children and adolescents (3.4%) younger than 18 years have experienced the death of a parent. When death can be anticipated, as with a terminal illness, and even when the death is sudden, as in the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, physicians and other health care professionals have an opportunity to ameliorate the impact of the loss. Developmental factors shape adolescents' reactions and responses to the death of a parent. Recent research in childhood and adolescent bereavement shows how health professionals can support the adolescent's coping strategies and prepare the family to facilitate an adolescent's mastery of adaptive tasks posed by the terminal phase of the parent's illness, the death, and its aftermath. Robert, a bereaved 14-year-old, illustrates some of these adaptive challenges. http://www.hadassah.org.il/NR/rdonlyres/CC8AAF22-ED2D-4F21-A499-501D04C74EAB/7594/adolescentgrief.pdf

Tipping the Scales: A Substantive Theory on the Value of group Music Therapy for Supporting Grieving

Abstract: The value of group music therapy for bereaved young people has been described in a number of studies using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This article details a qualitative investigation of a school-based program in Australia and presents the

results of a grounded theory analysis of focus-group interviews conducted with adolescents. A brief empirical theory is presented in combination with a set of relational statements, which conceptualize the phenomenon. This theory states that bereaved teenagers feel better if they have opportunities for fun and creative expression of their grief alongside their peers. This statement is compared to findings in the literature and addresses clinically relevant issues of: how music therapy engages young people; what active music making means in this context; what constitutes the action of —letting your feelings out‖; how the group influences the outcomes of its members; and how important a specific bereavement group is compared to a group with a broader loss and grief focus. http://barcelonapublishers.com/QIMTV5/McFerran(2010)QIMT5(1)1-42.pdf.

Adolescents and Grief: Counseling Adolescents Dealing with Grief

Adolescents are just beginning to become aware that death occurs in every living thing. As a result, they may not realize that death will occur to them or to those they love. They tend to believe that illness and death are produced by magic, human agency, or supernatural actions (Brewster, 1982). Schoen & Burgoyne assert that American culture frequently protects and/or overlooks discussions of death with children and youth (2004). We cannot exclude them from the grieving process or pretend that they do not understand death, loss, and grief. It is important to remember that adolescents grieve the loss of loved ones in a very similar fashion to adults. They go through similar grief stages as the stages of grief outlined by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross in her book On Death and Dying. It is important to allow children and teens to express their feelings of loss and give them outlets to turn to. Shielding them by limiting discussions about death may deny adolescents the right to mourn (Schoen & Burgoyne, 2004). Adolescence is a developmental period in which a youth is experiencing a great deal of change, especially as teenagers struggle with independence. Anger, depression, withdrawal, acting out, noncompliance, frustration, and confusion are typical grief responses (Metzgar, 2002). This article is unpublished but available online at:
http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/counseling/Faculty/salazar/528papers/AdolescentsGriefAndLoss.pdf

Article from the Field

Kelly, J. (July 23, 2009). Parental Death Has Major Impact on Depression Risk in Youth. Published in *Medscape Medical News* . http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/706384

Excerpt: A parent's death more than quadruples the risk for depression for children, adolescents, and young adults, new research shows. Further, depression affects 10% of bereaved youth compared with 2% of nonbereaved youth, and those who continue to be

depressed at 9 months are likely to continue to suffer from depression during the second year after the loss.

Investigators at the University of Pittsburgh's Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic say these data point to an important "window of opportunity" in the period soon after a parent's death when appropriate intervention might be most effective at preventing long-term depression in young people who have suffered the loss of a parent.

US Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. (2012). *Helping Children and Families With Separation and Loss.* Retrieved from https://www.childwelfare.gov/outofhome/casework/helping.cfm

Excerpt: Resources and information on grief and loss issues and their relation to various aspects of child welfare, including child abuse and neglect, out-of-home care, and adoption.

North American Council on Adoptable Children. (2009). *Ambiguous Loss Haunts Foster and Adopted Children*. http://www.nacac.org/adoptalk/ambigloss.html

Excerpt: When children—like those in or adopted from foster care—experience multiple losses, the psychological damage may extend well into adulthood. Ambiguous loss can erode trust, and adults who cannot trust typically struggle with relationships—sometimes avoiding closeness to forestall loss, sometimes clinging to a bad relationship due to deep-seated abandonment issues. The sooner children can address issues raised by ambiguous loss, the more likely it is they will learn better ways to deal with the fallout.

Websites

Coping with Loss and Grief Through Online Support Groups
The death of a loved one is a natural and inevitable life experience. Those who must cope with the loss, experience various grief reactions. Typically, people discuss their grief reaction with someone they know or do not discuss it at all. Current technology now enables people to cope with grief through participation in online support.
http://www.counseling.org/

Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Program: How to Support Grieving Youth
http://www.maine.gov/suicide/parents/support.htm

Excerpt: Grieving is a natural reaction to a death or other significant loss. Grief over the loss of a loved one is a process that is incorporated into the lives of survivors, forever

changing their lives. The grief reaction to suicide typically includes expression of shock, disbelief, denial, anger, guilt and shame.

The suicide of a friend or classmate can cause a special form of grief for children and teens. Children and teens will need your help – provide them with information, understanding and comfort. Follow normal household routines as much as is possible. This can provide a sense of comfort and safety to a grieving child.

Children express their reactions to a crisis in different ways. Children and teens may show anger, get upset easily, want to talk, or withdraw to make sense of it themselves. Younger children may be more open about their feelings than older children and teens.

Pets, Loss and Teen Grief :The Bill of Rights of Grieving Teens blog.tpronline.org/?p=285

Excerpt:
A grieving teen has the right….
…to know the truth about the death, the deceased, and the circumstances.
…to have questions answered honestly.
…to be heard with dignity and respect.
…to be silent and not tell you her/his grief emotions and thoughts.
…to not agree with your perceptions and conclusions.
…to see the person who died and the place of the death.
…to grieve any way she/he wants without hurting self or others.
…to feel all the feelings and to think all the thoughts of his/her own unique grief.
…to not have to follow the "Stages of Grief" as outlined in a high school health book.
…to grieve in one's own unique, individual way without censorship.
…to be angry at death, at the person who died, at God, at self, and at others.
…to have his/her own theological and philosophical beliefs about life and death.
…to be involved in the decisions about the rituals related to the death.
…to not be taken advantage of in this vulnerable mourning condition and circumstances.
…to have guilt about how he/she could have intervened to stop the death

Scholastic. (2012). *Children & Grief: Guidance & Support Resources.*
http://www.scholastic.com/childrenandgrief/