

When Someone Dies: Activity Cards for Young Children



A resource from the



NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR
CHILDREN'S GRIEF

Changed Within: My Inner Weather



AN UNDERSTANDING CHANGE ACTIVITY



Changed Within: My Inner Weather

Weather doesn't stay forever; it changes. Create a rainstorm using your hands, mouth, and feet.

What to Do:

- Slide your hands together in a rubbing motion.
- Click your tongue in your mouth.
- Change hands to clapping sound, clapping two fingers over the opposite palm.
- Move hands to clapping your thighs.
- Make a stormy wind sound with your mouth.
- Stomp your feet loudly.
- Make a thunder sound with your mouth.
- Reverse the order of the list above to help the storm quiet down and move on.

Helpful Questions:

- Now have fun exploring; what other weather sounds can you create?
- What if the weather had feelings?
- What feelings would you give a foggy day or a snowstorm?

AN UNDERSTANDING CHANGE ACTIVITY

Follow the Leader



A CONNECTING ACTIVITY



Follow the Leader

This activity helps family members to connect to each other and strengthen reading each other's cues.

What to Do:

- First pick a space with plenty of room to move around.
- One person creates a physical movement and others follow the movement.
- Take turns leading and following, adding new movements along the way.

Helpful Questions:

- What movement represents nervous?
- Can you show a movement that represents a new experience since the person died?
- What movement represents meeting new people?
- What does confusion look like?
- What does silly look like?
- What does tired look like?

A CONNECTING ACTIVITY

Parenting Tips

Gone but Not Forgotten

For a young child, “saying goodbye” to someone they love can be a confusing and frightening experience. These words (saying goodbye) can often cause deep feelings of abandonment, insecurity, and uncertainty even under normal life separations your younger-aged child may experience.

The phrase “gone but not forgotten” can help your child explore new creative ways to process and actively engage in honoring their own relationship with the person who has died without compromising their sense of safety in the present moment.



Parenting Tips

Tips

- Together create a memory collage. Using paper, cut out or draw pictures that remind the child of the person who died. The collage can help you and your child talk about the person who died.
- Create a new tradition within your family in which you set aside a date once a year to have an “I remember you party” in honor of the person who died. Consider including some favorites of the person who died, such as foods, colors, games, movies, etc.

Take Away

- By focusing and reinforcing the “Not Forgetting” the person who has died, your child will build a stronger sense of safety and security during a sad and difficult time.
- Allowing your child to “remember” and develop their own way of grieving will provide opportunities for you to build deeper bonds with them in this shared experience.