



GRIEF BLOWS

Grief Blows is an activity about being able to acknowledge the challenges that grief has presented in your family.

While engaging in this activity, try not to put too much pressure on saying the right things or making it all about grief. The ultimate goal is for the experience of doing the activity together allows you an opportunity to connect and learn from one another. Use it as a time to invite your child to share their thoughts and feelings about the death in your family, and remember that it is okay for you to share and show emotion.

When we model healthy ways to cope, we demonstrate the importance of expressing our emotions and send the message to our child that grief and hope can coexist.

Supplies you'll need:

- Small containers to hold paint solutions
 - Tempura paint or food coloring
 - Liquid dish soap
 - Water
 - Straws
 - A push pin, safety pin, or needle
 - Pieces of thick paper (construction, cardstock, etc.)
- How to do it:**
- First, you will need to make the paint solution. Add paint or food coloring to the bottom of the container, squeeze in a small amount of dish soap, then fill the container with a couple inches of water. You may have to attempt this solution a couple times to get the ratio that creates the best consistency. However, keep in mind that you want the solution to be thin enough that you can easily blow the bubbles over the paper. Mix as many colors as you want so that you have a variety to choose from.
 - The push pin is recommended to poke a hole in the straw to decrease your chances of sucking up the paint solution. If you are nervous about your child sucking in the solution, you may consider food coloring rather than tempura paint.
 - Once you have laid your paper down and created a variety of colors of paint solution, select a color, dip the end of the straw in the solution, then blow bubbles through the straw onto the paper. The bubbles should leave colored splatters and circle print!
 - There is no question that bubbles are a crowd-pleaser amongst all ages, so this is a great activity for all families.

Grief Blows Talking Points:

- We may have feelings that are all over the board. Sadness, anger, frustration, guilt, relief, happiness, etc. It is completely okay to feel all of these and more at once or at different times. Talk with your child about some of the feelings they may be having. Kids may feel confused about new emotions or feel “weird” or different from their peers. Validate their feelings by acknowledging that grief can be really hard at times. Compassionately reassure them by helping them to understand that their feelings won’t always be this intense and that things won’t always feel this hard; but while they are, help them find safe ways to cope.
- Ask your child if they chose specific colors of paint solution for a reason — I wonder why you chose the color red. Do you think of a certain feeling when you see that color?
- Do the colors mixing together remind you of how your feelings can sometimes be mixed together? Do they mix well or do they sometimes get messy and out of control? Is there a thing that you do or a person you go to when you are having all these mixed up emotions?

- Just like the bubbles bursting onto the paper, ask your child if there has ever been a time they felt like they could just burst because of a strong feeling or a mixture of emotions.
- While grief can blow, it can also be a time when we find strength, meaning, and hope among other things. Talk with your child about what they are looking forward to, what makes them happy right now, and if there is anything their experience has taught them. Help them to understand that it is important to still let ourselves feel joy and be excited about things that make us happy, even while missing our person.

If you need additional support, please contact Erin's House:

- **By phone:** 260.423.2466
- **By email:** Info@ErinsHouse.org
- **Online:** ErinsHouse.org



OUR MISSION

Erin's House provides support to children, teens, and their families who have experienced a death.

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