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# **Dealing with Death**

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Death can be expected or unexpected. Regardless, your family may go through a difficult and painful time following the loss of a loved one.

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We can assist you in finding the help you and your family need during this time.

College Station Police Department  
Victim Advocacy & Assistance Program

*The ♥ of Our Department*

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## Taking care of yourself

- Find ways to relieve stress such as exercise
- Limit exposure to television and radio
- Reach out to friends and family for support
- Limit caffeine in your diet
- Strive to not increase or decrease eating
- Try to keep joy and laughter in your life

## Emotional Stages of Death

Developed by Kubler-Ross

**When dealing with death, you can move in and out of each stage. The stages do not necessarily happen in order. The way you experience death is unique and individual.**

### Denial

The rejection of diagnosis or disbelief in what has happened. A stage that is often associated with feelings of numbness and shock.

### Anger

Asking questions such as “Why me?” or “What did I do to deserve this happening?”

### Bargaining

Trying to wrap up unfinished business. Hoping death will be postponed if you do specific things.

### Depression

Sadness over the inevitability of death. Knowing there is nothing you can do to change or stop it.

### Acceptance

Tiredness over fighting through the other stages. Believing that you are ready for death to happen.

### **An additional stage involves:**

### Recovery

A person has regained interest in life. Appetite and sleep patterns return to normal.

## What to Expect with Children & Adolescents Facing Death

Life experiences and exposure can affect the way young people handle death. If your child is under 10 when a family member dies, they might not fully conceptualize the finality of death. Be prepared to experience the trauma later when the child has a better understanding of the meaning. The age of comprehension varies.

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The age of adolescents is a time when death is usually farthest from our minds. Facing fears and anxieties about death can be difficult. Some adolescents want to talk about death, while others would rather internalize it. The grieving process is highly individualist and there is no one method that is endorsed over another. As a parent, you should educate yourself on the feelings and questions that your child might have. Some of the common impacts of death include: regressing in age emotionally and behaviorally, nightmares, eating difficulties, avoidance, insecurity, and guilt.

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As a parent, there are several steps you can take to help your child.

- Clear up misconceptions for children
- Explain to your children what to expect, especially regarding the funeral
- Communicate with school officials about what your child is experiencing
- Listen to your children and validate their emotions
- Create a safe environment and comfort them when needed
- Provide your children with confidence and empower them to heal
- If necessary, seek professional help for your children and your family during a time of loss

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The College Station Police Department is committed to helping our citizens during difficult times. If you would like to talk with someone about what is going on in your life following the death of a loved one, please contact

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Our department maintains a comprehensive list of local providers that can help you during this time. You do not have to struggle through this process alone.

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Information is also available at:

[www.cstx.gov](http://www.cstx.gov)

*Remember, anniversaries of the death of a loved one can cause emotions to resurface.*