Supporting the Grieving Student

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Survey of >1200 AFT members

- AFT, New York Life Foundation, Tiller Inc, Hart Research Associates
- 92% reported grief is serious problem that deserves more attention in schools
- Single most important barrier preventing teachers from providing support -- insufficient training and/or professional development
- 93% of classroom teachers never received bereavement training; 3% of schools/districts offer training
Loss is common in the lives of children

- Vast majority of children experience the death of a family member and/or friend by the time they complete high school
- 5% of children experience death of parent by 16
- It is highly likely you see a grieving child every day in school, even if you don’t see any children grieving
What to expect in schools in absence of intervention after crisis/loss

- ↓ Cognitive functioning and academic achievement (anxiety, ↓ concentration, sleep problems, depression)
- ↑ Absenteeism (school avoidance)
- ↑ Suspensions/expulsions (irritability, social regression, substance abuse)
- Taking time in schools to help children adjust to crisis and loss is essential to promote academic achievement
Coalition to Support Grieving Students

- American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA)
- American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- American School Counselors Association (ASCA)
- National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)
- National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)
- National Association of School Nurses (NASN)
- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)
- National Education Association (NEA)
- School Social Workers Association of America (SSWAA)
- School Superintendents Association (AASA)
Modules Placed into Six Sections

- Each section contains 2-4 video modules; each video is accompanied by handout that summarizes major points
- Conversation and Support
- Developmental and Cultural Considerations
- Practical Considerations
- Reactions and Triggers
- Professional Preparation and Self-Care
- Crisis and Other Special Circumstances
Additional Resources

• Guidance Documents
  – Practical guidelines developed by the NCSCB on how to respond to the death of a student or staff

• Parent booklet: *After a Loved One dies – How Children Grieve and How to Support Them*

• Articles

• Online Resources
  – Achildingrief.com
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LEAD FOUNDING MEMBERS

- NATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOOL CRISIS & BEREAVEMENT
- NEW YORK LIFE

FOUNDING MEMBERS

- AASA
- American Federation of School Administrators
- AFT
- American School Counselor Association
- NAESP
- National Association of School Nurses
- NASP
- National Association of School Psychologists
- NASSP
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- NMAHN
- National Multiethnic Association of Health Information Netoworks
- SSA
- School Social Work Association of America