

## **Grieving Children & Holidays**

Holidays, birthdays and special dates can be especially difficult for a grieving person, but children too, feel the loss of a beloved parent, grandparent, sibling or other special person during this time.

Often children find it hard to talk with their parent or other primary care giver about the person they lost. They remember the good times anticipated or shared with their lost love one as well as the quarrels, jealousies, or other difficult times children often have with the one who died. Help them by sharing your own remembrances.

This talking and remembering may make you cry. Unfortunately the child may misinterpret your tears. He may feel he has hurt you by bringing up memories. He may end up not talking about the dead person and try to smother this feelings of grief. Let him know that although a tear is shed, it makes you feel good to know that they remember the loved one.

Let children know that the the emotions of grief they are experiencing are normal for them, too. At times, children can suffer inwardly and it goes unnoticed by their parents. Then maybe a year or two, or five years later it comes out in the form of depression or personal problems.

Let children participate in holiday preparations. Let them help you decorate their loved one's grave, or make a special decoration for the house. Remember that they the holiday is important to children, but how they experience it is changed because of the loved one's death. Remember too, that they grieve intermittently. Therefore they will appear to turn their pain off and on. Understand that this is normal for children and allow for it.

Parents should show their love to the grieving children. Tell them that you LIKE them as

well as love them. Give them a hug, whether they are babies or fifty years old. They still need to know that they are special too.