Supporting Grieving Youth

What is Grief?
• A normal response to loss
• A natural part of the life cycle
• Unique and individualistic – everyone grieves differently. There is no right and wrong way to grieve
• A process that ebbs and flows, and has ups and downs
• A process that takes time, with no defined timetable

How to Support Youth:
• **Validate** and answer questions – youth often ask questions they are ready to hear the answers to
• Be as **honest** as possible – language is key
• **Provide** age appropriate **information**
• It’s okay to not have all the answers
• **Give eye contact** and attention
• Help the youth **identify feelings**
• **Offer choices** when possible
• Establish and **maintain routines**
• **Talk** about and remember what has been lost - **encourage** the sharing of memories
• Be a good listener
• Take breaks and **practice healthy coping skills**
• **Model grieving** and asking for help
• Know you can’t fix it