

Handout: **Stuff To Do With Kids Who Are Grieving**

*By helping children put their feelings
outside of themselves we can
help them heal.*

1) Make a Memory Book: (details avail on-line at www.skylight.org.nz)

The idea of this activity is to allow/encourage children to have access to memories of someone who is important to them while they are away, perhaps for a long time, or because of a death. It may be good to make the book with the child, if that is what they want.

Buy a scrapbook.

Collect drawings/photos/stories/memories about the deceased or absent person.

Put in their favourite recipes/places/friends/sayings etc.

Put them all in the book.

Leave space for more ideas later.

- 2) Read stories where the child can imagine they are the story characters. Snuggle together to read them.
- 3) Allow your child to visualise their feelings. They could use drawing, clay, paint or play-doh. Let the hurt, pain or fear be a character and let it talk...puppets could help in this.
- 4) Make a Loss Time-line with your child. Put in dates and pictures to make sense of what happened when. This makes multiple losses more concrete for a child.
- 5) Draw a family tree. If there have been deaths in the family, ensure the child sees all the other people in their life who can offer support to them.
- 6) If your child is old enough and enjoys it, they might like to keep a journal of their thinking, their drawings, bits of memories.....
- 7) Play play play...if that's what the child wants. Re-enact important events, dress up, pretend.....