

## FACTORS WHICH ENHANCE CHILDREN'S GRIEVING

*Adapted from Alan Wolfelt, Ph.D.*

- *Our own willingness and ability to grieve openly.*
- *Our willingness and ability to tolerate seeing/being with their pain.*
- *Communicating to them that we don't need them to protect us.*
- *Availability of safe adults outside the family with whom to relate.*
- *Good listeners who don't give advice or platitudes...a witness.*
- *Clear information and honest answers.*
- *A secure environment, some predictability, much stability.*
- *Opportunity to process with peers of similar age and experience.*
- *Planning of and participation in rituals and traditions.*
- *Acknowledgment of bereavement overload and pain of past losses.*
- *Encouragement to still just be a child, not an instant adult.*
- *Safety to explore family rules about grief, belief system.*
- *Validation when the relationship was abusive, negative or hurtful.  
Lack of feelings, resentment, etc. are acceptable responses.*
- *Network of support for the child.*
- *Reinforcement that the youth is not responsible for the death.*
- *Having help available immediately upon learning of the loss.*