



**Supporting Kidds**  
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## **Do We Really Need a Support Group?**

*Dr. Malina Spirito*

*Licensed Psychologist and Clinical Director of Supporting Kidds*

**Supporting Kidds offers *Healing Pathways*, a 6-week support group for grieving children (ages 5-18) who have lost an immediate family member.**

**Yes we're grieving, but I think we're doing fine. Do we really need a support group?**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

***Isn't a support group just for people who are mentally ill or having a problem?***

Bereavement support groups are actually intended to provide support for any person coping with grief. Support groups help to facilitate the normal grieving process, by offering information, support, and validation of the typical experiences and challenges that a person or family faces during times of loss and grief. For children, support groups offer a valuable opportunity for children to gather with same-aged peers coping with similar challenges. This can reduce the sense of isolation and loneliness that many grieving children experience.

***Is it too long or short since the death for us to come to group?***

There is no right or wrong time to attend our support group. Generally speaking, the majority of families served by Supporting Kidds attend group sometime between 6 months and 2 years following their loss. Families should consider their own life circumstances in order to assess whether they are able to commit the time and energy to participate in the 6-sessions of our bereavement support group.

***One of my children really seems to be more affected than the other. Should I just bring the one who is struggling?***

Our support group is appropriate for the whole family to participate, not just those who appear to be struggling the most. By having all your children participate, you help support the notion that grief is a family event.

***My kids and I are doing ok—won't this just drag up a lot of sadness?***

While a bereavement support group can certainly evoke a multitude of emotional reactions, you may be surprised at how much fun our participants have at Supporting Kidds. Our groups provide a variety of activities and social interactions that help build a sense of community and a sense of hope for families coping with loss.

***What do we need to do to sign up?***

Healing Pathways is currently offered twice per year; in the spring and fall. Each group session lasts for six consecutive weeks. Families interested in participating in Healing Pathways can email [support@supportingkidds.org](mailto:support@supportingkidds.org) or call 302-235-5544 to request an application.

We look forward to the chance to work with you and your family.

We work to ensure that no child grieves alone.