

Clear Creek County  
Victim's Advocates



303-679-2426

*Dealing With Grief...*

# *How Can I Help ?*

---

## *Suggestions for Friends and Relatives*

1. Your presence at any public service will provide support. Don't worry about what to say. A handshake or hug may say more than any rehearsed remarks.
2. Get in touch with the person. Telephone them. It is never too late to express your sympathy.
3. Don't say, "Call to let me know if I can help." Most people will never call. Take the initiative:
  - Cook a meal
  - Freeze a meal for future use
  - Babysit
  - Do some shopping they need done
  - Help with phone calls
  - Do some driving (airport, hotels, etc)
4. Let families talk. Listening is the most important support now. Let them tell their story over and over again. It is in telling the story that survivors are able to begin the healing process.
5. While listening, be cautious not to assume feelings, place blame, or realize reasons for what happened. You are not there to agree or to disagree, Listen and affirm their right to feel as they do.

6. Avoid making comments such as:
  - "You have other children"
  - "You'll get married again someday"
  - "It was God's will"
  - "Be brave"
  - "Don't cry"
  - "Don't talk about it"
7. Accept them for who they are and their changes. Your support now will help them accept themselves and to come to some sort of peace with the loss.
8. Share positive memories with families.
9. ~~It is hard for most of us to accept help. The family will need your help more and more as months pass, not less and less. Be gently persistent, thoughtful, and patient.~~
10. Don't suggest sedatives, drugs, or alcohol. If there are concerns or medication requirements, consult a physician.
11. Be sure to allow the family to arrange the services as they wish. Well-intentioned friends or relatives may discourage arrangements that are important to the families. Make suggestions and ask positive questions.
12. Understand that there is no timetable for grief. Allow families all the time they need. It could take months, and often years. Your thoughtfulness and patience will be appreciated.
13. Birth dates and death dates are remembered by survivors. Don't try to ignore them. Acknowledgement with a phone call or visit is reassuring to the family.
14. Don't be discouraged. With your love and support, they will gain the strength to continue on to find joy in life again.
15. Accept silence.
16. Comfort the children in the family.
17. Allow families to "work through" grief. Do not whisk away clothing or hide pictures. Do not criticize behavior you may judge as morbid.
18. Write a letter.
19. Encourage postponement of major decisions until after the initial period of intense grief.
20. Help families locate support services or groups.

## RESOURCE LIST FOR GRIEF CALLS

COUNTY CORONER, Don Allan, Call County Dispatch. 303-569-3232

FUNERAL HOME, Hegmann funeral Services, Chris Hegmann,  
303-567-4323

### CHURCHES:

Anglican, Church of St. John, IS, 303-537-0155, Father Fischer

First Baptist Church, Idaho Springs, 303-567-2028, David Barkley

St Paul's Catholic, Idaho Springs, 303-567-4662

Church of Christ, Idaho Springs, 303-567-4715

Grace Episcopal, Georgetown, 303-569-4965

Jehovah's Witness, Dumont, 303-567-9221

Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon), Dumont, 303-567-4965

Congregations Emanuel, (Jewish), 303-388-4013

Zion Lutheran, Idaho Springs, 303-567-4378, Sue Svanoe

Presbyterian, Georgetown, 303-567-2360

Rock Mtn. Evangelical Free, Black Hawk, 303-582-3325

### SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS:

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Program, 303-320-7771

Parents Without Partners, 303-430-4991

Jefferson Center for Mental Health, 1-800-201-5264

## Check List For Survivors

Survivors Check list after the death of a loved one	Who will be responsible	The date task was completed
* Indicates a death certificate is needed		
Note Book to Record any gifts, food, cards, visitors, and people helping		
Check to see if your loved one left a will, pre-arrangements or other means describing what their intentions were after death		
Notify Funeral Home and if out of state death then notify your local funeral home to help with arrangements		
Make arrangements for loved ones dependants		
If your loved one had pets make arrangements for them to be taken care of		
Make arrangements for someone to be in the house of your loved one if they lived alone		
Notify loved ones employer		
Stop any services like meals on wheels, home health visits or other services		
Notify family and friends		
For Travel Arrangements make sure and have Funeral Homes Telephone # (303) 567-4323		

## Check List For Survivors

Change all home utilities into your name if you shared the home with the deceased *		
Open a checking account only in your name		
Update your will		
Update beneficiaries on any IRA's, 401K's or other benefit plans		
Send out thank you cards		